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MR. BURKE'S INVECTIVE

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MR. COOPER, AND MR. WATT,

IN THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

ON THE 30TH OF APRIL, 1792.

BY THOMAS COOPER.

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A REPLY TO MR. BURKE'S INVECTIVE AGAINST MR. COOPER AND MR. WATT, IN THE *HOUSE OF COMMONS*, ON THE 30TH OF APRIL, 1792.

ON my return from France about a fortnight ago, I was not a little ſurpriſed to find the addreſs preſented to the *Jacobins* by myſelf and Mr. Watt, on the part of the Conſtitutional Society of MANCHESTER, had been made a ſubject of Parliamentary diſcuſſion. I read the debates, however, without the ſlighteſt intention of noticing them publickly, conceiving that in the preſent State of Mr. Burke's reputation, his ridiculous fears, and intemperate invectives, would not furniſh a ſufficient reaſon to intrude myſelf on the public, in defence of conduct which ſeemed to me to require no apology. But finding the groſs blunders and obvious miſrepreſentations of Mr. Burke adopted and retailed in ſome degree by a herd of parliamentary orators, (who ought at leaſt to have known enough of that gentleman to be cautious of following where he led the way,) I have been compelled to take up the pen in juſtification of my conduct and intentions. I do this reluctantly, and I ſhall do it imperfectly, for I have objects of more importance to myſelf to occupy my time and my thoughts at preſent, and I ſhall be obliged to incroach upon moments that ſhould be otherwiſe devoted.*

On the firſt peruſal of theſe debates, I was amuſed at the unexpected importance thus given to Mr. Watt and myſelf, and I could not help feeling ſome little regret that Mr. Burke's

* Having undertaken to juſtify my own conduct upon this occaſion, it was impoſſible to avoid doing the ſame reſpecting Mr. Watt and the Mancheſter Society: but I write without the knowledge of, or any communication with either.

character was at too low an ebb, for us to derive much credit from his abuſe. Dreaded by his friends, the blind tool of his enemies, the Marplot of every political cauſe to which he conjoins himſelf, nothing that Mr. Burke could have ſaid would have induced me at this time to have troubled the public with one word of reply. But others having joined in this hue and cry of ignorance and inattention, Mr. Burke has once more the ſatisfaction (probably for the laſt time of his life) to find himſelf the *ignis fatuus* of a party; who under his guidance will ſoon plunge into ſome political quagmire, or the public will be ſtrangely miſtaken. For the preſent, however, I may venture to regard Mr. Burke's ſpeech as a proper Text for the comments I have to make on this occaſion.

This Gentleman is reported (in the Morning Chronicle and General Evening Poſt) to have expreſſed himſelf in ſubſtance thus:—"That there were in this country men who "ſcrupled not to enter into an alliance with a ſet in France of "the worſt traitors and regicides that had ever been heard "of, the club of the Jacobins. Agents had been ſent from "this country, to enter into a fœderation with that iniquitous "club, and thoſe were men of ſome conſideration here; "the names he alluded to were Thomas Cooper and James "Watt, (here Mr. Burke read the addreſs preſented to the "Club of the Jacobins by thoſe men on the 16th April.) "He ſaid this was nothing of fancy or invention, but an "avowal, that there were Clubs in this country who bound "themſelves by a fœderation with thoſe regicides to ap-"prove their conduct and act in concert with them; upon "this he dwelt for a conſiderable time with much ſeverity. "He likewiſe could name others who avowed ſimilar prin-"ciples; for inſtance, Mr. Walker of Mancheſter; and "what did thoſe people do, did they only give their own "ſentiments? No; by the anſwer of the Jacobins' club, "it appeared that thoſe worthies of Mancheſter undertook, "from what authority he knew not, to repreſent all En-"gland; they ſpoke, and were ſworn into this fœderation, "in the name of the people of England. This led him "to ſtate, that, however upright the motives of the Ho-"nourable Gentlemen near him might be, they muſt ne-"ceſſarily, in order to ſucceed in their object, unite them-"ſelves with ſome of the worſt men in the kingdom." Such are the aſſertions attributed to Mr. Burke; and I doubt not truly ſo, for they contain as much miſtake and miſre-

pre-

preſentation as could well be crouded within the ſame compaſs. It would be too hard in me to require from my old antagoniſt, that his proofs ſhould accompany his aſſertions: he admits no ſuch clauſe among his rules of controverſy. Perhaps he is right, and having tried the experiment without ſucceſs, he has declined the practice: he finds them probably like an ill-aſſorted couple, perpetually at variance when together, and therefore beſt kept ſeparate. Under theſe circumſtances I muſt be content to make out the negative, as well as a negative is capable of being made out: and ſhew,

That this deſcription of the Jacobins as "a ſet of the "worſt traitors and regicides that ever exiſted," is a palpable untruth.

That Mr. Watt and myſelf were *not ſent* from this country expreſsly to enter into a fœderation with this club, altho' I ſee no objection to the meaſure if we had been.

That the Mancheſter Society has not bound itſelf by any conduct or expreſſion on the part of Mr. Watt or myſelf, to a general approbation of the conduct of the Jacobins, or to act in concert with them.

That we did not undertake to repreſent all England, as this parliamentary "Worthy" thinks fit to inſinuate—that we were not ſworn into any fœderation; and that we did not ſpeak otherwiſe than as deputies of the Mancheſter Society.

Perhaps alſo it will not be improper or difficult to ſhew, that a correſpondence for the mutual improvement and communication of political knowledge between Societies of different Nations, ſo far from deſerving reprehenſion, is highly expedient.

That the correſpondence of the Mancheſter Society, ſo far from being unprecedented, is no more than a repetition of the precedent already ſo honourably ſet by the Revolution Society of London.

That we are falſely charged with ſentiments and intentions hoſtile to the conſtitution.

And that Mr. Burke is probably miſtaken in ſuppoſing us the worſt men in the kingdom while *he* is alive to make the aſſertion.

With reſpect to the *Jacobins*, who have been the ſubject of ſo much ignorant abuſe, the ſimple fact is this: Early in the progreſs of the French Revolution, a number of patriotic Societies were formed at different places, and under dif-

different appellations, to diſcuſs the politics of the day, and propagate the principles of general Liberty. One of theſe Societies called the *Friends of the Conſtitution*, becoming numerous, rented a part of the old Convent of the Jacobins, at Paris, for the purpoſe of their meetings. The diſcuſſions that took place there, and the occaſional publications iſſued from thence, attracted the public attention ſo ſtrongly, and coincided ſo well with the ſentiments of the people, that the Conſtitutional Society at the Jacobins ſoon became the largeſt and moſt important of the patriotic Societies of France, and ſimilar correſponding meetings, under the ſame appellation of " Friends of the Conſtitution," were formed in moſt of the principal towns of the kingdom. The Jacobins, therefore, (as they are called from the place of meeting of the Pariſian Society) conſiſt of a large part of the French people; a deciſive proof of their merit, and a full reply to the calumnies of their enemies.

Mr Burke calls them *Traitors* and *Regicides:* what meaning (if any) he affixes to theſe appellations I know not; in the common acceptation of the words, the aſſertion cannot be true. The Society at the Jacobins exerciſe no public function—they are not officers of ſtate, legiſlative, executive, or judicial—they have no public truſt repoſed in them —and they do nothing but debate political ſubjects, and now and then direct the publication of a political diſcourſe. Upon the very face of it therefore, this aſſertion of Mr. Burke has either no meaning, or a falſe one. They cannot be *Traitors*, for as *Jacobins*, they have no poſt, office or duty to fulfil, or betray. As individuals, they are like the component parts of all other human ſocieties, good and bad, and indifferent: but if the good did not greatly preponderate, they would never have experienced the ſupport of their fellow citizens, or the invectives of Mr. Burke; nor would they have become the objects of hatred and dread, to the deſpotic governments of their European neighbours.

Equally falſe or unmeaning is Mr. Burke's appellation of *Regicides*, as applied to the Jacobins. The king of the French is alive, and chooſes his Miniſters from among the Members of this very Society—who—have not yet " *hurled* " him from his Throne.*

* Since this was written, the barefaced Treachery of that infatuated Monarch has compelled the nation to depoſe him from a Throne, which he ſo unworthily occupied.

Nor

Nor were Mr. Watt and myſelf *ſent* from this kingdom for the purpoſe of eſtabliſhing any political correſpondence whatever. He left this country upon the commercial concerns of the houſe in which he is engaged, and I accompanied him as a relaxation from long-continued application to buſineſs here, and becauſe I was glad of the opportunity of viſiting Paris with a man whom I love and eſteem, and whoſe introductions to ſociety there were the ſame with my own. The circumſtance of our being at Paris, occaſioned the deputation to be ſent to us from Mancheſter, and we had been there near a month before we received it. This is no farther worth notice, than to ſhew the inaccuracy, and ſyſtematic exaggeration of the man who has undertaken to accuſe us.

We are charged with "having bound ourſelves by a fœ-" deration with theſe Regicides, to approve their conduct, " and act in concert with them."—Thus much it is true we have ſaid, viz. " Our ſociety will be happy to join its " efforts to yours in propagating thoſe important principles " of Liberty, which alone can fix on a firm and immova-" ble baſis the empire of peace, and the happineſs of " mankind." There is no other ſentence in the addreſs to which this charge can poſſibly allude. Such is the *ſpecific* purpoſe for which we have undertaken to act in concert with the Jacobins. Mr. Burke, who complains ſo grievouſly of this fœderation, is therefore by his own confeſſion the declared enemy of all attempts to " propagate the ge-" neral principles of liberty, and promote the empire of " peace and the happineſs of mankind."

Nor did we undertake to repreſent all England—Nor did we ſpeak in the name of the people of England, but directly otherwiſe—Nor were we ſworn in any manner, or into any fœderation whatever—Theſe accuſations are evidently the effects of a diſturbed imagination: they are mere *Burkiſms*; aſſertions without proof, and invective without argument. There is no evidence whatever, (nor *can* there be any) that we ſpoke any thing at the Jacobins but the words contained in the addreſs we have publiſhed, in which there is not one ſyllable in ſupport of the aſſertions thus hazarded by Mr. Burke, but an expreſs declaration that we addreſſed the ſociety of Jacobins merely as the deputies of the Mancheſter ſociety. The anſwer of the Preſident, and the Letter to the Conſtitutional Society

here, we give as we received them, not conceiving ourſelves at liberty (even if we had been willing) to make the ſlighteſt alteration, or in any way reſponſible for the ſentiments contained in them. But in neither of thoſe papers can I find any thing like proof of Mr. Burke's accuſations. This charge, therefore, (if it be correctly reported) is a groſs impoſition on the Houſe of Commons, in which it was delivered—an attack upon the character of Mr. Watt and myſelf, which no conduct of ours has authoriſed—and neither more nor leſs than a *flagrant untruth*. I call upon Mr. Burke to contradict or to prove theſe aſſertions aſcribed to him, and if (even in his own opinion) he has any character of veracity to loſe, to vindicate himſelf from this public impeachment of it. perhaps, however, this "right honourable gentleman" will ſhelter himſelf under the fancied conſequence of his own character. —Perhaps he regarded theſe aſſertions as mere figures of ſpeech—fictions of oratory — ſpecimens of elegant invective, in which he thought himſelf at liberty to indulge at the expence of the more vulgar quality of truth—or, perhaps, feeling how he himſelf would have acted in our ſituation, he unluckily meaſured us by his own ſtandard, and riſked the charge.

This outcry againſt the exiſtence and mutual correſpondence of political ſocieties, foreign and domeſtic, is no ſlight argument of their utility. It amounts to proof that this means of communicating knowledge to the public, is likely to be attended with beneficial effects to the beſt intereſts of mankind, or it would not be an object of ſo much alarm to the penſioned advocates of ariſtocracy. The people now ſee the great importance of political enquiries, and extenſive influence of the maxims of government; which operate directly or indirectly on every moment of our exiſtence, and every action of our lives. They perceive much to learn, and much to unlearn, on the queſtion of civil government; they expect as their right, a free acceſs to all peaceable means of information, and exclaim with reaſon, "we will be kept in the trammels of implicit belief no "longer."

However plain and ſimple the true principles of government may be, when diveſted of that garb of complication and myſtery, in which ſtate-craft has enveloped them, it is certain

certain that they are not yet fully ſettled among thoſe who profeſs to write, and reaſon on the ſubject. The beſt political writers of the preſent day, among the Engliſh and French, are not agreed on points of conſiderable moment; and Mr. Burke himſelf has taken no ſmall pains to magnify the difficulties attending a branch of knowledge, of which, he dreads while he promotes the public diſcuſſion. Difficulties there are; ſuch as ignorance and artifice have created: but if they exiſt, (of whatever kind they may be) why throw obſtacles in the way of enquiry, and deny the means of removing them? At any rate, Mr. Burke, whoſe time for two years paſt, has been chiefly occupied in publiſhing diſcourſes of political myſticiſm, ought to be the laſt to cry out againſt any ſource of information on a ſubject which he has laboured ſo indefatigably to obſcure.—Equally aware, that public ignorance is the intereſt of courts, and public information the intereſts of the people, the patriotic ſocieties of France and England profeſs the ſame general principles of equal liberty, and have preciſely the ſame *general* object in view, viz. the improvement and propagation of political knowledge. In France, as is natural, they diſcuſs the temporary occurrences of their own country; we, thoſe of ours; but the ſame ſcience and the ſame principles are equally applicable to both. Theſe ſocieties, in each kingdom, entertaining therefore the ſame general deſign of extending the bounds of knowledge on the moſt important of all ſubjects of enquiry, can it be deemed improper or unbecoming, that they ſhould mutually communicate for a common purpoſe? Is there any impropriety in the *philoſophical* ſocieties of London, Paris, or Stockholm, correſponding for the improvement of chemiſtry, or experimental philoſophy? On the contrary, do they not all court correſpondencies as the moſt effectual means of diffuſing information? Why then ſhould ſocieties inſtituted for the promotion of *political* knowledge, be debarred from the common means of improvement? If it be a crime to enlighten the people upon the ſubject of politics, why do not our adverſaries ſay ſo at once, and take that ground of accuſation: if it be no crime, why deny the common methods of communication permitted and adopted in every other branch of human ſcience? If (with reſpect to Mr. Watt and myſelf) it be ſaid that our correſpondence with the Jacobins was with other views, and for other purpoſes of ſeditious complexion,

I appeal to the facts; I deny the charge, and I challenge the proof. Let him who ſhall hereafter make the accuſation, and ſhrink back from the proof thus called for, take the only reply I ſhall condeſcend to give on ſuch an occaſion, *Mentiris impudentiſſimè.*

But after all, why this anxiety among the governments of Europe (our own among the reſt) to ſtop the progreſs of knowledge, and cut off the ſources of political information? Why this dread leſt the people (the *ſwiniſh multitude*, as their friend, Mr. Burke, calls them) ſhould think too much, and reaſon too much on their own rights, and their own intereſts? leſt the deep veil of myſtery, which ſtate-craft has thrown over the ſcience of government, ſhould perchance be withdrawn, and the tranſactions of court-politics be expoſed to public obſervation? If the foundations of theſe gaudy ſuperſtructures be unſound, this conduct is eaſily explained: but if governments do actually mean well, if their principles and actions will bear examination, why this general dread of inveſtigation? why give room to ſuſpect that "Men love darkneſs rather than light—becauſe their "deeds are evil."

This correſpondence of the Mancheſter Society with the Jacobins, is not only juſtifiable as being nothing more than a purſuit of the ſame means which every other European ſociety has adopted, to improve and extend its common object of inveſtigation, but is ſupported by precedents directly in point, long known to the public, and which have hitherto excited no fears or apprehenſions that I have heard of, except in the viſionary brain of Mr. Burke, the *communis Rixator* upon theſe occaſions. The late Dr. Price, and the preſent Earl of Stanhope, in the year 1789, conducted a correſpondence exactly of the ſame kind, (and containing the ſame ſentiments with thoſe expreſſed by Mr. Watt and myſelf, in our addreſs,) on the part of the *Revolution Society of London*, with the National Aſſembly of France, and various patriotic ſocieties of that Kingdom. This correſpondence has ſince been extended to the following *Jacobin* Societies, viz. THE FRIENDS OF THE CONSTITUTION at Paris, Aix, Alais, Arras, Auxerre, Amiens, Bourdeaux, Breſt, Bayonne, Bourges, Bergerac, Calais, Chalon-ſur-Saone, Creſſey, Cherburgh, Clermont-Ferrand, Chartres, Cognac, Dijon, De Marrennes, Grenoble, Honfleurs, Havre, Hieres, Liſle, Liſieure, Limoges, Largon, La Rochelle, L'Orient,

Montargis, Montpelier, Marſeilles, Nantes, Niſmes, Orleans, Pontois, Poitiers, Rouen, Rennes, Straſburg, St. Servan, Tours, Toulouſe, Verſailles, Valence, and Vire ; and the letters to and from all theſe ſocieties have been regularly printed for public information.—Moreover the French colours uſually diſplayed at the dinners of the Revolution Society in London, are a preſent from ſome of theſe Jacobin ſocieties, and (as I underſtand) the Britiſh flag which hangs up in the hall of the Jacobins, at Paris, combined with the colours of France and America, was a preſent from the Revolution ſociety; emblems in each country of mutual amity and good will.

Had Great Britain and France been at enmity together when theſe correſpondencies took place, (as Great Britain and America were, when Mr. Burke correſponded with Dr. Franklin and Mr. Laurens,) ſomething might have been urged againſt the propriety of this intercourſe; altho' the communications of private ſocieties for the purpoſe of improving the theory of political philoſophy, would have been hardly reprehenſible under any circumſtances; and in compariſon of Mr. Burke's correſpondence on the occaſion juſt mentioned, would have been highly expedient and praiſeworthy. But fortunately for both countries, Great Britain and France are not at war together, but at peace; for their mutual good and for the good of mankind, may they ever continue ſo! Our communication with the Jacobins therefore, has not one tint of the ſuſpicious complexion of Mr. Burke's correſpondence above noticed. But the infatuated forgetfulneſs, the inſolent inconſiſtency of this man are now almoſt proverbial: he has long ceaſed to bluſh for himſelf; let his friends, if he has any, bluſh for him.

The ſyſtem of the former court of France (like that of every court unchecked by the influence of the people,) was war, and even in this country we have been abſurdly and impiouſly taught to ſpeak of the French as our *natural enemies*. As if the benevolent Author of Nature had purpoſely ſown the ſeeds of perpetual diſcord between his common offſpring! But the idea is blaſphemy: if we have been enemies, we have been, not natural, but artificial enemies. By nature we are brethren as well as neighbours; by the intrigues of courts and of miniſters, we have been mutually beaſts of prey. The French, firſt of all, ſaw the folly and the wickedneſs of this long continued ſyſtem of periodical hoſtility

hoſtility and ſnarling peace. They have ſaid "We will be "your enemies no longer; it neither ſuits our intereſt or "our inclination: we ſee at length, that in this mutual "ſtate of animoſity between nations, the authors of our e-"vils are the gainers by them, while the ſword, and fa-"mine, and the peſtilence, are the wretched lot of the de-"luded people."—Much to their honour the Revolution Society of London, were the firſt to offer their congratulations to the French on the adoption of this ſyſtem of benevolence and peace. And much as I think to their honour, the Society of Mancheſter have trodden in the ſame path, and expreſſed the ſame ſentiments. But if it be a *crime* to wiſh earneſtly for "the fraternal union of all men; "for the empire of peace, and the happineſs of man-"kind," the Mancheſter Society, and their deputies, muſt plead guilty to the charge. To me however, it appears "aſtoniſhing" (in the language of Dr. Price, and the Duke de la Rochefaucault, reſpecting the correſpondence between the Revolution Society of London, and the French patriotic ſocieties,*) "if any perſon who has within him "a ſpark of zeal for liberty and human happineſs, ſhould "be able to read theſe papers without delight. We ſee in "them the dawn of a glorious day, when (ſhould ſenti-"ments congenial to thoſe of France prevail in Britain,) "two nations at the head of the world, convinced of the "folly of war, and laying aſide jealouſies, ſhall embrace "each other and form a fraternal and intimate union; not "for the vile purpoſes of avarice and conqueſt, but to "ſpread the knowledge of human rights, to extend the "bleſſings of juſtice and liberty, and to promote *Peace on "earth, and good will towards men.*"

Such are the only objects, ſo far as I know, of the patriotic ſocieties of France or England, which I have at any time frequented, or with which I am connected: and they are in fact, the only objects intended or expreſſed in the addreſs which gave ſo much offence to Mr. Burke, and which received the panegyric of his invectives.

But what muſt be the complection of that man's mind, who can be irritated to a degree of political inſanity at theſe expreſſions of friendſhip and benevolence towards our neighbours and fellow creatures? Who ſickens at the thought of perpetual peace and fraternal union between

* Appendix to Dr. Price's Diſcourſe on the Love of our Country, p. 20.

rival

rival nations! who entertains no ſentiments of compaſſion, but for the rich and the great, the kings, and the nobles of the earth! who can contemplate without emotion the proſpect of bloodſhed and devaſtation among millions of the devoted victims of pride and deſpotiſm, and who bewails with feminine lamentation, the loſs of a nickname or a gewgaw, the broken play-things of a puerile nobility! who ſeems to regard the *people* as fit only for the goad, and the whip, and the ſpur; for labour without intermiſſion, in peace; for ſlaughter without commiſeration, in war—and who, blaſpheming againſt human nature itſelf, impiouſly terms the great maſs of mankind, *the ſwiniſh multitude!*

If the PEOPLE, in this *right honourable gentleman*'s opinion, be ſwine, no wonder at his antipathy to any ſociety which profeſſes to regard the rights of the people; rights whoſe exiſtence he expreſsly denies, and whoſe defenders he treats as the friends of anarchy and confuſion, and the diſturbers of the peace of ſociety; the cant terms of ariſtocratic abuſe, againſt thoſe who aſſert the Rights of Man.—But in contempt of Mr. Burke, I appeal to the PEOPLE; whom in perfect oppoſition to him, I regard as the only claſs of the community worth appealing to; and I call upon them to judge what credit is due to this man's accuſations, and what is the complexion of the cauſe that requires his ſupport!

Thus much, the unexpected notice taken of our correſpondence with the Jacobins, has induced me to ſay in juſtification of Mr. Watt and myſelf, as deputies from the Mancheſter Society. I cannot help regarding it as a diſgrace, not to us, but to the nation, that any circumſtances ſhould have made a juſtification neceſſary. It remains only reſpecting this part of my ſubject, to make a few obſervations on the apparent irregularity of the parliamentary diſcuſſion it occaſioned.

The Conſtitutional Societies of Great Britain and France, (the Jacobins among the reſt) are not public but private ſocieties. They interfere in no public buſineſs any farther than to expreſs their opinions of public tranſactions—they exerciſe no public functions—they are no part of the legiſlative, executive, or judicial powers of either country—they are neither more nor leſs than amicable meetings of individuals, aſſembled to diſcuſs political queſtions and occurrences, and to communicate to each other and the public, political knowledge;

neither

neither acting nor arrogating beyond their right as individuals of doing the ſame. If a petition, for inſtance, were preſented to the Houſe of Commons from the Conſtitutional Society of Mancheſter, or the Revolution Society of London, I apprehend it could not be received; ſuch bodies not exerciſing any public function, nor being officially cognizable under thoſe appellations.

Being no member of the legiſlature, I do not pretend to be converſant in the forms of parliamentary proceedings, but I cannot help thinking at preſent, that it is ſomewhat irregular to notice with reprehenſion in the Houſe of Commons* the actions of private ſocieties, or of individuals, who, if they have done wrong, can be puniſhed by the laws of the land, and who, if they cannot be puniſhed, *have done no wrong*; for the laws of every community are the only meaſure of public right, and public expedience. The attack upon Mr. Watt and myſelf, therefore, in the Houſe of Commons, ſeems, in the firſt place, to have been irregular, for our actions were not within the cognizance of that houſe, but of the laws of our country. 2dly. It was imprudent in thoſe who introduced it, and in the houſe who permitted it; for it expoſed the imbecility of the proceedings, and the unmeaning waſte of time occupied by the debate. 3dly. It was unjuſt, becauſe the houſe ought not to have permitted an accuſation againſt the conduct of men who had done nothing contrary to any known law of the land. If our actions were illegal, why not direct the Attorney-General to proſecute? If legal, why accuſe us? If the penal code be not already ſufficiently voluminous—if it be too ſcanty to reach the offence, why not add to the ſanguinary catalogue of pains, penalties, and prohibitions?

We are farther accuſed (in common with ſeveral of the patriotic ſocieties of Great Britain) of no leſs a deſign than that of overturning the Britiſh Conſtitution.

What the deſigns of thoſe ſocieties are, I know not, except from their publiſhed reſolutions and declarations, in which I cannot diſcover the ſlighteſt proof of any ſuch intention. The chief, and indeed almoſt the only object of every ſuch inſtitution with which I am acquainted, is, ſuch a reform in the parliamentary repreſentation of Great Britain, as will enſure to the people that the Houſe of Commons ſhall

* Unleſs as a ground for directing a parliamentary impeachment, or a proſecution by the Attorney-General: Which were not even hinted at in our caſe.

ſhall uniformly ſpeak their ſentiments. At preſent, that houſe does not conſiſt of the repreſentatives of the *people* but of lords and rich land-holders; of miniſters and borough-mongers, who "buy and ſell ſeats in parliament "as openly and notoriouſly, as ſtalls for cattle at a fair"—who buy and ſell the people, their nominal electors, as if they were ſlaves appurtenant to the ſoil—who treat them as the worſt ſpecies of ſlaves, buying and ſelling their voices and inclinations; dealing in the conſciences of their tenantry, as a fair object of traffic, and who profit without remorſe, by the wreck of public virtue! ſuch (in great part) is a Britiſh Houſe of Commons: ſuch are the herd who wallow in the ſunſhine of miniſterial approbation, and fatten upon public corruption—who cry out againſt all reform, as dangerous to the ſtate, becauſe it is dangerous to their own ſyſtem of iniquity—who ignominiouſly treat as diſturbers of the public peace, all thoſe who call upon them to cleanſe this *Augean Stable*.—Who are aware of the notoriety of the facts ſo repeatedly charged upon them, and are content to vomit forth in reply, their indiſcriminate abuſe, and lull the public clamour by diſguſting panegyrics on their own immaculate integrity! But the people are nauſeated with this repeated ſoporific. They are alive to the neceſſity of ſome deciſive alteration. Having introduced the queſtion of reform till it became a periodical jeſt, and having experienced ſo frequently, the inſolent cenſure, or ſovereign contempt with which their humble petitions have been treated, *they may in time* become weary of a practice which they have ſo repeatedly and ineffectually tried; they may DEMAND hereafter what they PETITION for now; and at ſome moment of intolerable provocation, they may be induced to regard their ſelf-elected aſſembly of repreſentatives, as a "houſe of ill fame," and in the energetic language of Mr. Burke's prophecy, they may "be tempted to "go to work the ſhorteſt way, and *abate* the nuiſance."

At preſent there is reaſon to believe, that about 70 or 80 perſons are enabled to ſend an efficient majority of members to Parliament, ſo that the Houſe of Commons is in fact, the repreſentative of this virtuous band of ariſtocratic electors. It is not true, therefore, that this government is a government by King, Lords, and Commons; for the commons, or people, are *not* repreſented.—"The Commons "of England in Parliament aſſembled," is a phraſe falſe and

abſurd; it ſhould be the deputies of the ariſtocracy in Parliament aſſembled! If a wiſh to reform this manifeſt abuſe, be the ſame with an intention to overturn the Britiſh Conſtitution, I moſt certainly admit the charge; *but I am ſeriouſly and decidedly of opinion, that in the preſent circumſtances of this country, no man can be juſtified in going farther than a complete and effectual reform in the repreſentation of the people, and the duration of Parliaments.* Theſe are my ſentiments; theſe are the ſentiments of my political friends, whether in or out of the patriotic ſocieties of this country, with which I am connected. If my conduct or opinions ſhall again be deemed worthy of public notice, I hope, after this declaration, I ſhall not again be peſtered with the ſhallow, malevolent fictions of my adverſaries, nor accuſed without proof, of meditating deſigns which I thus publickly diſavow.

It is with doubt and heſitation that I can bring myſelf at any time to coincide with Mr. Burke's opinions, aware, as I am, of his habitual obliquity of thinking, and knowing his perpetual tendency to dreſs up error in the meretricious garb of eloquent declamation, and impoſe her upon the world for truth. At preſent, however, I cannot help agreeing with him, that "the burthen of proof lies heavily on thoſe who "tear to pieces the whole frame and contexture of their "country.—That, in their political arrangements men "have no right to put the well being of the preſent generation wholly out of the queſtion.—And that a ſore and "preſſing evil muſt be removed, and a great and unequivocal good muſt be probable almoſt to a certainty, before "the well being of a number of our fellow citizens is paid "for a revolution. ***If ever we ought to be œconomiſts, "even to parſimony, it is in the voluntary production of evil. "Every revolution contains in it ſomething of evil."

Theſe are, without doubt, circumſtances of ſerious conſideration, fairly applicable to the preſent ſtate of this country, and which wiſe and temperate men will not fail to weigh. They ſpeak ſtrongly in favour of an amendation of the preſent ſyſtem rather than a revolution, of which the evil would be grievous, extenſive, and inevitable.

In fact, what is right in theory is one thing: what is expedient in practice, is frequently another. As a queſtion of mere theory, and abſtract diſcuſſion, the controverſy reſpecting the political utility of *privileged orders*, is nearly over.

over.* Among thoſe who have attended to the ſubject impartially, it is impoſſible to deny that an hereditary monarchy, an hereditary nobility, hereditary legiſlators, and hereditary judges, are indeed excellently well calculated to make the happineſs and welfare of the many ſubſervient to the pride and emolument of the few, but have a decided tendency to counteract the great object of all Government, *the good of the people*. Abſtractedly conſidered, or with reference to a new-formed ſtate, there is good reaſon to regard them as incumbrances, abſurd and uſeleſs, dangerous and unjuſt.

Suppoſe a conſtitution about to be new-formed, and that of Great Britain propoſed as the model. Such a propoſal, I believe, was made at one time in America, and is actually made at this moment by one part of the French malecontents.

The firſt abſurdity that ſtrikes one, on the face of ſuch a propoſition, is the diviſion of the nation (i. e. the people) into three diſtinct claſſes or corporations; of which the firſt ſhall conſiſt of one man, the ſecond of a few hundred men; and the third, ſeveral millions! While there is but one order of men in the nation, viz. the people, there can be but one common intereſt, viz. the intereſt of that ſole order, i. e. of the whole: preciſely the great object for which civil government is adopted and ſubmitted to. But if two other orders are created, disjoined from the maſs of the people, with excluſive privileges and ſeparate intereſts, tranſmiſſible in perpetuity by hereditary ſucceſſion, the object of government in this caſe will be, not the one great and ſimple intereſt of the nation or people, but the complicate and oppoſing intereſts of the three ſeparate orders.

The reſpective intereſts of theſe three orders will be attended to in proportion to the degree of power and influence aſſigned to each of them by the conſtitution. If the making of the laws, the expounding the laws, the executing the

* In our country, *Milton*, *Harrington*, and *Sydney*, have treated expreſsly on the danger and inutility of monarchy; but the ſubject has been much more profoundly, as well as popularly diſcuſſed within theſe two years. Thoſe who will take the trouble of peruſing the "Eſſai ſur les Privileges," and the Sequel to it, (Qu' eſt ce que le Tiers-Etat) of the *Abbe Sieyes*, *Paine's* "Rights of Man, part 1 and 2," *Barlow's* "Advice to the privileged Orders," and *Oſwald's* "Review of the Conſtitution of Great Britain," will find almoſt every thing that the ſubject affords on one ſide of the queſtion. The "Eſſai ſur les Privileges" has been tranſlated into Engliſh; the other French pamphlet above mentioned well deſerves to be ſo.

laws, and the naval and military force for the defence of the ſtate, be committed to any *one* of theſe orders, it is obvious that the intereſt of the other two, will be made ſubſervient to this third.—If theſe public offices or functions be divided between any *two* orders, the intereſt of the remaining claſs will be made ſubſervient to that of the other two. This is ſo obviouſly probable, not to ſay inevitable, from the natural tendency which every man, and every body of men have to promote their own intereſt in preference to others, that it needs no confirmation by reference to fact. In Great Britain the monarch inherits the excluſive privilege of managing the army and the navy; of making war and peace; of forming one third part of the legiſlature of the country; and of chooſing the judicial and executive magiſtrates of the kingdom. The nobility of this country inherit, among other privileges, that of ſitting in their own right as hereditary legiſlators, and hereditary judges, and form another third part of the legiſlature of the kingdom. And the people (the millions) are partly induced, and partly compelled to content themſelves with the ſemblance of chooſing the remaining third part of the legiſlature, which decides, or ſeems to decide, on the ſupplies! under theſe circumſtances, it is almoſt ſuperfluous to aſk which are the intereſts moſt likely to be firſt attended to? The anſwer, however, to this queſtion may be found in part by a reference to the civil liſt, the red book of places and ſinecures, the article of ſecret ſervice money, the long, ſad catalogue of national taxes, the public debt, the laws of inheritance, and the penal code.

The next inconſiſtency obvious in ſuch a ſcheme is, that the people, who would be naturally deſirous that the Government ſhould be conducted with a ſingle eye to their good, (ſince they could have no other inducement to adopt a government at all), ſhould commit the charge of it to perſons whom they cannot change for miſconduct, and over whom they renounce all controul! If I want my buſineſs well managed, for my own benefit, I preſerve my right of changing my ſervants and agents whenever they become faithleſs or negligent—but if I make then independant of me, every body can foreſee that my affairs will either be neglected, or conducted, not for my benefit, but for theirs. Such an inſtance of abſurdity, therefore, hardly ever occurs in the common practice of life. But how much

greater

greater the abſurdity of doing this, with reſpect to the momentous buſineſs of a nation! Yet ſuch is the caſe where privileged orders are irrevocably admitted into a ſtate with excluſive titles to public offices and functions, and made permanent by hereditary ſucceſſion.

Another objection to theſe eſtabliſhments is the expence of them. Labour is the price which nature has ordained that man ſhould pay for ſubſiſtence and comfort. "By "the ſweat of thy brow ſhalt thou eat bread." As one part therefore, of the neceſſary evils attendant upon civil government, is the expence of it, the people ſhould take care for their own ſakes, not only to exclude all ſources of extravagance, but to have as few means of expence as poſſible. Where this buſineſs *has* been left to the people, as in America, they *have* taken care to confine ſtate-expenditure within the bounds of moderation, "the whole expence "of the fœderal government of America,* founded on the "ſyſtem of repreſentation, and extending over a country "nearly ten times as large as England, is but 600,000 dol-"lars, or about £.135000 ſterling." In Great Britain, where the buſineſs of government has *not* been left to the people, but chiefly to the hereditary functions of the kingdom, the ſums levied annually for public purpoſes, including the items enumerated by ſir John Sinclair†, in his hiſtory of the revenue, amount at preſent to a ſum not leſs than 25 *million ſterling!* It will admit of a great deal of controverſy, how much of this is attributable directly, and how much more indirectly to the influence of the privileged orders operating perpetually on the meaſures adopted, for about a century and a half paſt: but as I have neither time nor information neceſſary for the purpoſe, I ſhall leave this to the conſideration of others, and content myſelf with one fact only in illuſtration of this objection. The income of his Majeſty George the Third, which has been regarded as not more than neceſſary for the maintenance of kingly dignity, may be reckoned one way or other ‡, at twelve hundred thouſand pounds annually. Suppoſing the average price of labour to be a ſhilling a day throughout Great Britain, his Majeſty's expences conſume the perpetual daily labour of above ſixty thouſand men. With us, there can be no queſtion about the matter: but if ſuch an eſta-

* Rights of Man, part 2. p. 38. † Part 2. p. 164.

‡ Including the allowance to the Royal Family, and the ſums advanced to diſcharge the Civil Liſt Debt.

bliſhment

bliſhment were propoſed to a people about to frame a new Conſtitution, it might well be aſked, whether ſuch public ſervices as are regularly performed by the Kings of Great Britain, are equivalent to the inconvenience of ſetting apart the daily labour of *ſixty thouſand* of the people to repay them? It may be obſerved, that by the 22 Geo. III. c. 82, there is a regular diſtribution of the Civil Liſt income; in which it appears that £.32,955 is appropriated to pay the ſalaries of the Lord Chancellor, the Speaker of the Houſe of Commons, and all the Judges of England and Wales, which, together, amount to that ſum; and 89,799l. 2½d. is appropriated to the *menial ſervants* of his Majeſty's houſehold. Such (upon parliamentary authority) is in this kingdom the comparative eſtimate of utility and ſhow.

Another abſurdity in the ſyſtem of hereditary functionaries is, that it manifeſtly implies the poſſeſſion of qualities not hereditary, but perſonal—not tranſmiſſible by deſcent, but acquirable only. "As the exerciſe of government re-"quires talents and abilities, and as talents and abilities "cannot have hereditary deſcent, it is evident that heredi-"tary ſucceſſion requires a belief from man to which his "reaſon cannot ſubſcribe, and which can only be eſtabliſh-"ed upon his ignorance; and the more ignorant any cour-"try is, the better it is fitted for this ſpecies of govern-"ment." To which may be added, that it requires not only talents and abilities, but knowledge, experience, and integrity; which in the caſe of hereditary ſucceſſion, are left entirely to the production of chance. In our country we ſee that the buſineſs of the nation is actually done by thoſe who owe nothing to their anceſtors, but have raiſed themſelves into ſituations which the idleneſs and ignorance of the titled orders incapacitate them from filling.

The ſyſtem of privileged orders and hereditary functions, not only preſumes á priori, and without experience, the perpetual ſucceſſion of virtue, knowledge, and abilities, in caſes where there is a bare poſſibility of exiſtence, but it implies and commits itſelf upon the exiſtence of theſe qualities directly in the teeth of fact and experience, for we know too well, that kings and nobles are not exempt from childhood, and diſeaſe, and weakneſs, and vice.

The admiſſion of hereditary functions in a ſtate, is further abſurd and inconſiſtent, becauſe it implies a perfect abſence of almoſt every motive which will induce men to make

make the neceſſary acquiſitions, or uſe the requiſite induſtry in the ſtations they are born to fill. If a man ſeeks for honour or emolument, he will have an adequate motive to uſe the neceſſary means of obtaining them; and where theſe are fairly held out as the temptation and reward of extraordinary talents or great exertions, thoſe who ſeek to acquire, will take care to earn them.—Take away theſe inducements by giving them in advance, and you ſtop the growth of abilities and knowledge, and you nip wiſdom and virtue in the bud. Nobility has earned, in its cradle, the rewards due to a well ſpent life, and a long courſe of public ſervice; and no motive to acquirement remains but the reputation which may ariſe from the ſingularity of the attempt. Even this ſolitary motive is inefficient, and fame itſelf loſes half its influence upon nobility; for the hypocritical ſemblance of public attention and reſpect they enjoy without it, and the appearance is to them equivalent to the reality. In the *common* courſe of events therefore, public virtue can hardly be expected to ſpring forth among the privileged orders, but from the rank ſoil of impoveriſhing diſſipation, or inſatiable ambition.

But farther, kings and nobles are not only placed in a ſituation which precludes the operation of all the common motives to good and to great actions, but they are almoſt inevitably brought up to an habitual indulgence in luxury and vice. With every perſon around them paying, even to their childhood, that homage and reſpect which would be almoſt idolatrous to the maturity of abilities or virtue—with every appetite pampered, every wiſh indulged, every gratification eagerly procured—with no buſineſs but their pleaſure, no motive to exertion but the indulgence of their paſſions—hearing in the ſociety they frequent, and obſerving in the common courſe of life, that laborious occupations are conſidered as diſgraceful, and that induſtry is beneath the attention of nobility—that learning and knowledge will juſt qualify their poſſeſſor to become the obſequious tutor or dependant companion of ſome dunce of quality—and feeling that they themſelves are already in poſſeſſion of every enjoyment for which the great maſs of mankind are perpetually and anxiouſly toiling—thus educated, what is to be expected from them but an habitual indulgence of vicious inclinations, and an habitual diſregard of public opinion? and in what nation upon earth, I aſk, has nobility diſappointed this common expectation?

From

From hence ariſes *another* moſt ſerious objection to hereditary titles, privileges, and orders—they are from their nature and tendency, and they are known to be from fact and experience, the hot-beds of luxury, idleneſs, and immorality.—Happy for ociety if theſe baneful qualities could be confined to the orders thus privileged. But of theſe (unfortunately) is compoſed "the faſhionable world."—Alas! is it neceſſary to aſk any man of common ſenſe, and common obſervation, what are the faſhions of "the faſhionable world?" What are the characteriſtic actions and demeanour of that ſyren claſs of ſociety, who proverbially controul the manners of the day, and thus fatally allure the voluntary homage of public imitation? It is too notorious that here is the fountain-head of luxurious oſtentation, and vicious indulgence; whoſe noxious ſtreams have infected the great maſs of the community, corrupting private morals and domeſtic enjoyment; creating the melancholy temptation to unwarrantable parade, and gloſſing over the deformity of vice itſelf, by the prevalent example of thoſe, who, unbluſhingly monopolize all the nominal attributes of conſummate virtue.

Some years ago, there was a toaſt in vogue among the faſhionable world, to this purpoſe, "May elegant vice prevail over dull virtue,"—perhaps it is ſtill in repute, for Mr. Burke, (the profeſſed advocate of the privileged orders) very feelingly laments the loſs of "that ſenſibility which "ennobled whatever it touched, and under which *vice loſt* "*half its evil, by loſing all its groſſneſs.*" On this text let the reader make his own comment!

The ſyſtem of privileged orders includes, moreover, the manifeſt abſurdity of diſtinctions not founded on, but directly oppoſite to thoſe of nature, ſtrength, and wiſdom, and talents, and good diſpoſitions—ſuperior capacity of body or mind—ſuperior induſtry or activity, do, and ought to create proportionate diſtinctions, and to bring with them their own reward. Theſe are the differences, and the only favourable differences which the God of nature has thought fit to create among his offſpring; and their tendency is manifeſt to promote the good of mankind, becauſe the common evidence of their exiſtence is the beneficial effects they produce. But man has thought fit to create, and ſubmit to other diſtinctions, of a different complexion, and

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an oppoſite tendency; and the kings and nobles of the earth impoſing upon the childhood of ſociety, have cunningly ſubſtituted titles for qualities, and names for things, and ſet up themſelves and their poſterity as the perpetual idols of public adoration.

The ſyſtem of hereditary monarchy and hereditary nobility, with its concomitant attribute of hereditary legiſlation, is moreover highly abſurd, as involving other poſitions of manifeſt inconſiſtency. If a people divide themſelves into three claſſes, and commit the privilege of making laws, and declaring the national will to one man, and 500 men, and the repreſentatives of 5 million of men, jointly, they declare by the act itſelf, not merely that the few ſhall be equivalent to the many, but that the nation is not the nation—that the will of the majority ſhall not be the will of the majority—and they ordain in this unnatural ſyſtem of political arithmetic, that one and five ſhall make five thouſand! The *Abbe Sieyes* has expreſſed himſelf ſo well on this ſubject, that I ſhall tranſcribe the paſſage. " Au- " jourd'hui nous avons non ſeulement une conſtitution, " mais ſi l'on en croit les privilegiés, elle renferme deux diſ- " poſitions excellentes et inattaquables. La premiere c'eſt " *la diviſion par ordres* de citoyens; la ſeconde, *c'eſt l'egalite* " *d'influence* pour chaque ordre, dans la formation de la " volonté nationale. Nous avons bien aſſez prouvé deja " qu'alors même que toutes ces choſes formeroient notre " conſtitution, la nation ſeroit toujours maitreſſe de les " changer. Il reſte à examiner plus particulierement la " nature de cette *egalitè d'influence* que l'on voudroit at- " tribuer a chaque ordre ſur la volonté nationale. Nous " allons voir que cette idée eſt la plus abſurde poſſible, et " qu'il n'y a pas de nation qui puiſſe rien mettre de pareil " dans ſa conſtitution.

" Une ſocieté politique ne peut etre que l'enſemble des " aſſociés. Une nation ne peut decider qu'elle ne ſera pas " la nation: ou qu'elle ne le ſera que d'une maniére; car " ce ſeroit dire qu'elle ne l'eſt point de toute autre. De " même une nation ne peut ſtatuer que ſa volonté commune " ceſſera d'etre ſa volonté commune. Il eſt malheureux " d'avoir à enoncer de ces propoſitions, dont la ſimplicité " paroitra niaiſe, ſi l'on ne ſongeoit aux conſequences qu'on " veut en tirer. Donc une nation n'a jamais pu ſtatuer " que les droits inherens á la volontè commune, c'eſt à dire

" á la pluralité, paſſeroient á la minorité. La volonté
" commune ne peut pas ſe detruire elle même. Elle ne
" peut pas changer la nature de choſes, et faire que l'avis
" de la minorité ſoit l'avis de la pluralité. On voit bien
" qu'n pareil ſtatut au lieu d'etre un acte legal ou moral
" ſeroit un acte de demence.

" Si donc on pretend qu'il appartient a la conſtitution
" Françoiſe, que deux cent mille individus faſſent ſur un
" nombre de vingt millions de citoyens les deux tiers de
" la volonté commune, que repondre ſi ce n'eſt qu'on ſou-
" tient que deux et deux font cinq ?

" Les volontés individuelles ſont les ſeuls elemens de la
" volonté commune. On ne peut ni priver le plus grand
" nombre du droit d'y concourir, ni arreter que dix volon-
" tés n'en vaudroient qu'une, contre dix autres qui en vau-
" droient trente. Ce ſont la des contradictions dans les
" termes ; des veritables abſurdités.

" Si l'on abandonne un ſeul inſtant ce principe de pre-
" miere evidence, que la volonté commune eſt l'avis de la
" pluralité et non celui de la minorité, il eſt inutile de par-
" ler raiſon. Au même titre on peut decider que la volonté
" d'un ſeul ſera dite la pluralité, et il n'eſt plus beſoin ni
" d'etats generaux ni de volonté nationale, &c. car ſi la
" volonté d'un noble peut en valoir dix, pourquoi celle d'un
" miniſtre n'en vaudroit-il pas cent, un million, vingt-ſix
" millions ? Avec de pareilles raiſons on peut fort bien
" renvoyer chez eux tous les deputés nationaux, et etouffer
" toutes les reclamations des peuples."*

Again: if theſe titles, privileges, and offices of inheritance are of no importance in ſociety, how miſplaced is the arrogance and hauteur which their poſſeſſors aſſume from them; and how ridiculous the imaginary conſequence they annex to, and the public tribute of homage and ſervility they claim from them! If on the contrary, they *are* of that moment which the general demeanour of the privileged orders ſeems to indicate, how inconſiſtently abſurd is it that an infant or an ideot may, in ſome caſes, fulfil the duties, and in all enjoy the honours annexed to them?—that knowledge and integrity ſhall confer no additional claim, and that negligence or vice ſhall induce no incapacitation? The poet aſks,

* Qu'eſt ce que le Tiers Etat—p. 126, Troiſieme Edition, 1789.

What

" What can ennoble fools, and knaves, and cowards ?"

The anſwer is the echo—fools and knaves, and cowards.

It is melancholy to reflect, that obſervations ſuch as theſe are fully warranted by the hiſtory of paſt times, and not contradicted by the general complexion of preſent occurrences in any part of the globe, where privileged orders are eſtabliſhed among men. It is undeniable that theſe hereditary diſtinctions of rank and office, imply in their very nature and conſtitution, a manifeſt tendency to debaſe, inſtead of ennobling the human character; by taking away the motives and miſapplying the rewards of virtuous exertion, and by affording temptation and impunity to vicious indulgence.

Aware, perhaps of their inability to earn or preſerve the teſtimony of public reſpect by the general tenor of their actions, the privileged orders, in all ages and nations, have cunningly deviſed a means of blinding the eyes of the multitude, by the artificial glare of *titles of honour* and diſtinction of dreſs.* Careleſs of intrinſic merit, they have been monopoliſts of every nominal virtue which fiction and flattery have combined to create; and in every age, and every country, they have ſedulouſly appropriated to themſelves, attributes of the moſt ridiculous extravagance, the moſt fulſome adulation, and (in fact) the keeneſt and moſt ironical ſarcaſm. The language of every nation has been tortured, to furniſh appellations of the moſt hyperbolical panegyric, to gratify their unbounded vanity, and glut their inſatiable avarice of unmerited praiſe. Even the hallowed epithets and ceremonies of religious adoration, have been impiouſly preſſed into the ſervice of indiſcriminate flattery, and the kings and nobles of the earth have not ſcrupled to encroach upon the majeſty of Heaven! It is more than ridicule, it is contempt and indignation, that hiſtory produces in the mind of the aſtoniſhed reader, when ſhe unfolds the genuine characters of theſe moſt ſacred, moſt chriſtian, moſt noble, moſt puiſſant, high and mighty ſovereigns and rulers of the globe. It is this claſs of mankind that furniſhes the compleateſt ſpecimens of mental depravity, and which ſeems to have gloried in being the voluntary inſtrument of the vengeance of Heaven for the

* They have even adopted a ſyſtem of appropriated gluttony to diſtinguiſh themſelves from the people; thus the ſturgeon and the whale, with us, are royal fiſh.

ſins of mankind. The ſum of miſery produced by the pride, the revenge, the ignorance, and the ambition of kings exceeds the utmoſt ſtretch of human calculation. The unfeeling *ſyſtematic* devaſtation of the human race, which this claſs of beings have unremittingly and unrelentingly purſued, is almoſt incredible, even to thoſe who read with aſtoniſhment the undeniable evidence of facts which compoſe the bulk of ancient and modern hiſtory. All the fancied utility of monarchs and monarchy, from the beginning of time to the preſent hour, is unequal to the maſs of evil occaſioned by the ſovereigns of Europe collectively within this half century,* or even comparable in extent to the evident deminution of human happineſs, at preſent meditated† by the combination of European deſpots, royal and noble, againſt the liberties of Poland and France.

——Vengeance in the lurid air
Lifts her red arm expos'd and bare;
On whom the rav'nous brood of fate,
Who lap the blood of ſorrow, wait, (COLLINS.)

Such are the PRIVILEGED ORDERS; the titled race to whom nations bow the knee, and pay the ſervile homage of idolatrous proſtration.

I have indeed endeavoured to ſhew the *abſurdity and inconſiſtency* involved in this ſyſtem of privileged corporations in a ſtate, to which titles of honour and offices of truſt and profit are hereditarily, and in general almoſt excluſively confined: but it is hardly poſſible to treat them with mere ridicule, or abſtractly to diſcuſs their inherent abſurdity and contradiction, without giving vent to ſentiments of indignation, and abhorrence, at the arrogant pretenſions they ſet up, and the ſerious miſchiefs they occaſion: it is a melancholy ſubject, and ſorrow ſtifles the naſcent ſmile of ridicule on contemplating this productive ſource of human wretchedneſs. I proceed, however, in the unpleaſant taſk of ſhewing the propriety of the other epithets I have appli'd to the adopted theory of hereditary privileges of rank and function.

They are *uſeleſs:* a poſition that may now be advanced upon the beſt of all foundations; the moſt flouriſhing nation on the face of the globe, America, having tried the experiment of doing without them on a very extenſive ſcale,

* This is a ſubject that well deſerves particular treatment.

† I ſhall notice, by and by, the truly diabolical advice of Mr. Burke on this ſubject.

for

for near twenty years, and with ſucceſs fully equal to the moſt ſanguine expectation of her beſt wiſhers. Thus far, therefore, we tread on better than ſpeculative ground. And America has at length confuted the advocates of king and nobles by facts that admit of no controverſy. He that runs may read, and thoſe only are unable to ſee who are previouſly determined to cloſe their eyes to the light; content to ſhrink under practical confutation, while they wilfully reject conviction.

The conſtitutions of the American States ſuggeſt to me ſome obſervation on the general theory of political ſocieties, which I think important.

I have always thought that it will be found on examination, (whether purſued with a view to mere theory, or the evidence of paſt facts,) that every government has been, and will be conducted for the advantage in the firſt inſtance of the *governors*, whoever they are: and the whole ſecret lies in making thoſe the *actual* governors, whether directly or indirectly, whoſe intereſts and welfare are intended to be the main object of the government.

All government may be reduced to that of the *few* governing the *many*, or the *many* governing *themſelves*: and this laſt diviſion will be, either directly, by the people meeting in perſon, (which in a large community will be morally impoſſible) or indirectly, by elected agents or repreſentatives removable by the people.

Hitherto (America excepted) the affairs of nations have been conducted by the few governing the many, with permanent authority held in life-tenancy or inheritance; and the people have univerſally been ſubject (except in the republics, *as they are called*) to monarchs, or nobles, or both. The conſequence has been, that in all ſuch governments, kings and nobles have flouriſhed at the expence of the people, who have been univerſally regarded merely as the footſtools of their pride, and the means of their gratification. The hereditary orders have been the leeches of the community—the warts and tumours unnaturally growing upon, and deforming the fair frame of the body politic. To every general propoſition there are exceptions; there are very few to this.

In the republics (as they are falſely called) antient and modern. ſuch as thoſe of Greece and Rome, Holland, Venice, Genoa, &c. there has always exiſted a nobility; the government has always been in the hands of a permanent

nent ariſtocracy, in conjunction with a certain portion only of the people, more or leſs large, more or leſs ſubjected. The conſequence hence has been, that the ariſtocracy, ſeeking their own intereſt on the one hand, and the people theirs on the other, there has been a perpetual tendency to inteſtine commotion; to ſtruggles and quarrels between the governors and the governed. Such governments are bad for the few, in proportion to the ſhare of power poſſeſſed by the many—and for the many, in proportion to the power poſſeſſed by the hereditary few. The Commonwealth of *Rome* is a ſtriking illuſtration of theſe remarks. To inſtance, therefore, the inexpediency of republican government, by an appeal to the unſettled ſituation of ſtates which are *called* republican, merely becauſe they have had no king, however common it be, is the effect either of groſs ignorance, or inexcuſable artifice and impoſition. The more ſettled and leſs turbulent ſituation of monarchial ſtates with an hereditary nobility, is merely the effect of a combination and monopoly of power, which more completely ſuppreſſes the complaints of the people, breaks their ſpirits, and deters them from any attempt at purſuing their own intereſts.

If the good of the people therefore is to be the object of government, THEY MUST BE THEIR OWN GOVERNORS—they muſt adopt, *in fact*, the government of the MANY by the MANY. But in a ſtate of extenſive territory, or numerous inhabitants, they cannot be *perſonally* their own governors; their numbers prevent their meeting when neceſſary, and acting effectually when met. This was tried upon a ſmall ſcale at Athens, but the effect was ſuch as we might naturally look for.

The MANY therefore, can only govern themſelves by means of agents or repreſentatives appointed for the purpoſe; and that theſe agents or repreſentatives may be truly ſuch—that they may not introduce gradually and effectually the other diviſion of government, viz. that of the many by the permanent few—they muſt be either removable at pleaſure, at ſhort periods, or by rotative excluſion.

This ſyſtem of repreſentative government with excluſion by periodical rotation of the public officers, (which if not neceſſary, ſeems at leaſt expedient) has not been well underſtood till of late years; and America is the only country which affords tolerably fair examples from which the other nations of the globe may judge of its effects. The ſimplicity, the tranquillity, and the cheapneſs of this

ſyſtem, are unanſwerably manifeſt in that quarter of the globe, although it is not yet arrived at its maturity even there; owing apparently to the hereditary prejudices of the people in favour of the Britiſh form of government, when they adopted their preſent, moſt important improvement. even the French conſtitution, though of late date, is obviouſly imperfect, from the prevailing influence of temporary obſtacles, and the perhaps neceſſary ſacrifice to prejudice and apparent expedience among that otherwiſe enlightened people. While its preſent conſtituent parts are preſerved, it will be, as it has been and ſtill is, perpetually ſubject to the influence of mutual jealouſy and diſtruſt between the court and the people; and a patriot citizen, when elected miniſter, is, and ever will be, a juſt object of ſuſpicion, the inſtant he gets within the vortex of the civil liſt—*Hinc illæ clades* * !

When the people (as among the American governments) by their agents or repreſentatives fairly elected, chooſe their own officers of ſtate, returnable either periodically or at the will of the conſtituents, into the great maſs of the community, there can be but one predominant intereſt, that of the PEOPLE; there can be ultimately but one ſet of governors, the PEOPLE preſcribing for themſelves.

When on the contrary, (as among other nations the caſe is, more or leſs), the legiſlative and executive powers of the ſtate, and all the great officers of magiſtracy are committed to certain families—the people, inſtead of ſervants, have maſters; inſtead of being their own governors, they are governed; inſtead of mutual independence and equality, they are converted into property, and become *ſubjects*; inſtead of the welfare of the community being the predominant motive for every meaſure adopted by the ſtate, a multitude of permanent corporations are eſtabliſhed with excluſive privileges, and having a ſeparate intereſt from the intereſt of the people, and each poſſeſſing the means as well as the inclination of purſuing its own intereſt at the expence of the people.

For their own welfare, therefore, it ſhould ſeem that privileged orders are neceſſary; for the welfare of the people, far otherwiſe. The American republics have taught us experimentally, that nations *may* flouriſh and be happy who have, "no biſhops, no nobles, no kings."

* Since this was written, they have had manifeſt experience of this truth; and they bid fair *now*, to frame a conſtitution, unclogged by unneceſſary functionaries, and unburthened with unneceſſary expence.

These hereditary functions are farther useless to the people, because it appears from fact, that the business involved in the offices they inherit, is rarely transacted by them, but by their deputies. One set of men usually fulfil the duties, and another enjoys the honours and emoluments of hereditary functions. Let us examine for instance, how the case stands in our own country.

It is a maxim with us, that the king can do no wrong—that he is not personally responsible for any act of state, but that his ministers alone are culpable and punishable for mal-administration. In discussing, therefore, any measure apparently proceeding from his majesty, it is uniformly spoken of and treated as the act of his ministers, and they alone are considered as the authors of it: unless it should happen to be popular, in which case his majesty is complimented with being regarded as a joint sharer in the honour with the ministers, his advisers. So that in truth and in fact, his majesty's duties, as first officer of state, are confined to the choice of his ministers, who do the business of the state; and these too are frequently forced upon him by the prevailing political party of the times. Mr. Burke, about the time when he first entered into the service of aristocracy, published a pamphlet entitled, "Thoughts on the causes of the present discontents:" the evident and laboured tendency of which was, to incroach upon the prerogative of the crown, and to prove that certain great heads of families, of the opposition aristocracy, had a right to expect that his Majesty should choose his ministers perpetually and exclusively from among them. In fact, this has been from that time to this time, the subject matter of perpetual struggle between the court and the opposition of this kingdom; the people being made the occasional stalking-horse to conceal the interested designs of both parties*. For what party the shallow talents and tinselled eloquence of Mr. Burke are

* Le Gouvernement est en Angleterre le sujet d'un combat continuel entre le ministere et l'aristocratie de l'opposition. La nation et le roi y paroissent presque comme simples spectateurs. La politique du roi consiste a adopter toujours le parti le plus fort. La nation redoute egalement l'un et l'autre parti. Il faut pour son salut que le combat dure, elle soutient donc le plus foible pour l'empecher d'être tout a fait ecrasé. Mais si le peuple, au lieu de laisser le maniement de ses affaires servir de prix dans cette lutte de gladiateurs, vouloit, s'en occuper lui même par de veritables representans, croit-on de bonne foi que toute l'importance que l'on attache aujourd'hui a la *balance des pouvoirs* ne tomberoit pas avec un ordre de choses que seul la rend necessaire? Qu'est ce que le Tiers Etat. p. 99.

employed,

employed, is of little importance, excepting for the harm he does to the cauſe of his friends; *his* political character is ſettled by unanimous conſent, *ſatis eloquentiæ, ſapientiæ parum:* but freedom ſtill mourns over the political apoſtacy of *one man* on whom the hopes of the people have been too long and too fondly placed; who forgetting what is due to his paſt profeſſions and future reputation, ſeems at length reluctantly but irrevocably entangled in the ſame inglorious cauſe.

It appears, therefore, that in Great Britain, a king has in fact, nothing or next to nothing to do; all his nominal functions being actually fulfilled by others, who are reſponſible * for the fulfilment of them, as for their *own* act and deed.—Let us next enquire into the uſe of our hereditary nobility.

They are *by virtue of their birth*, hereditary legiſlators, and hereditary judges: makers and expounders of the law.

I venture however without ſcruple to ſtate it as a notorious fact, that the *actual* legiſlators of the country, whether conſidered as to the propoſing or diſcuſſing of laws, are (with very ſlight exceptions) not the hereditary, but the elected legiſlators—the miniſters for the time being, together with thoſe noblemen who have acquired a ſeat in the upper houſe, not by hereditary deſcent, but by paſt ſervices. Let my reader run over in his mind, who are the active members of the Houſe of Lords, and conſider alſo how ſeldom any law is originally propoſed there, and he will find that the truly *hereditary nobility* conſtitute nine tenths of the mutes and dead votes.

In caſe of any law queſtion upon a writ of error, it is notorious that the judges of the courts below guide the deciſions of the houſe: the hereditary judges rarely pretend to an opinion upon the ſubject. Indeed it is impoſſible for the profeſſional judges themſelves, who have ſpent long lives in the ſtudy, to know with certainty in very many caſes what the law is, and they differ very frequently both on the bench and elſewhere—how abſurd therefore is it to ſuppoſe that this requiſite knowledge is fairly to be expected from men, who have no adequate inducement to make even the common attainments? Thus it ever muſt be when the rewards of merit, are given in advance. It is a trite obſervation in common life, that thoſe are the worſt paymaſters who pay before hand.

* I mean legally and conſtitutionally reſponſible—they take good care not to be actually ſo.

In the ſyſtem of privileged orders, hereditary legiſlators and hereditary judges are made, by diſqualifying them in the firſt inſtance, from ever becoming what they are required to be: it is not ſurpriſing therefore that they are not in fact, what they have no motive to become. I do in my conſcience believe, that the Engliſh nobility are ſuperior in merit and attainments, to the nobles of any other nation upon earth; and I have therefore uſed them in illuſtration of my poſition; but if their comparative utility in the ſtate be ſo ſlight here, what are we to think of the neceſſity of this ſyſtem elſewhere?

Farther, if the privileged orders of ſociety are not required to *earn* their envied diſtinctions, if they have no concomitant *duties* to fulfil in conſideration of the privileges they enjoy, their inutility is manifeſt, and the queſtion is ſettled on this ground—if on the contrary they have ſuch duties to perform, theſe orders are ſtill uſeleſs, for a commoner (as one of the people is contemptuouſly termed in the proud language of ariſtocracy) may be as equal to any office whatever, as another man who is called a duke or a lord; and the privileges thus granted in conſideration of ſervices to be rendered, had evidently better be given when merit is aſcertained, than conceded in advance upon a bare poſſibility of their being deſerved. In the one caſe alſo the people are confined in their choice to a comparatively ſmall number of perſons, with little or no inducement to make the neceſſary attainments; while in the other caſe they have the range of the whole community, and the ſatisfaction of knowing that it is their own fault if they chooſe ill, and the conſolation, that it is in their own power to rectify the miſchoice.

It would appear therefore, that theſe hereditary diſtinctions are of no avail to any uſeful purpoſe in ſociety, even if the experiment of relinquiſhing them had not been fairly tried—but it has been tried: and the fact and the theory are completely of accord.

Moreover theſe privileged orders appear to me not merely uſeleſs, but to the general welfare of ſociety—to the morals of ſociety—to the peace, tranquillity, and ſafety of ſociety, detrimental, and even *dangerous*.

To the general welfare of ſociety they are detrimental, becauſe they form an aggregate of corporations diſtinct from the great maſs of the community; with intereſts ſeparate

parate from, and frequently inconſiſtent with thoſe of the community. It is the intereſt of the *people* to obtain the benefits of civil ſociety to as great an extent, at as little expence, and with as few circumſtances of artificial inferiority between beings naturally of the ſame claſs, as poſſible; it is the intereſt of *kings and nobles* to acquire as much diſtinction of rank, as much artificial ſuperiority over their fellow citizens, as many hereditary privileges for themſelves and their deſcendants, in ſhort, as much power, as much honour, and as much emolument, with as little occaſion for talents or exertion, with as little expence of time and trouble, as they can. And where is the man who can honeſtly ſay, he would not be influenced by the ſame motives in the ſame ſituation? Some kind of attention to the welfare of the people where it does not interfere with their own, they are of courſe compelled to pay, partly for the ſake of appearance, and partly becauſe the people are the neceſſary inſtruments of their riches and grandeur. This, however, is obviouſly but a ſecondary conſideration. Unluckily for the great bulk of mankind, theſe privileged orders, having the power for the moſt part in their own hands, have generally ſucceeded too well in the purſuit of their primary Object; while the *people*, having relinquiſhed the power, not merely to perſons, but to families, have relinquiſhed alſo the means of purſuing their own intereſts, and of making the welfare of the community at large, the ſole ſubject (as it ought to be) of civil government.

Theſe orders are farther detrimental to the general welfare of the community, becauſe it frequently enſues from this hereditary monopoly of offices of truſt and importance, that they are filled by perſons who are unequal to the duties of them; and what is worſe, by perſons who are generally not removable for negligence or incapacity; for they ſet up an *hereditary* claim to ſuch poſts, and they alſo form a part of a body who, like all other corporations, will have a fellow feeling for one of their own order, and will act under the common influence of an *eſprit de corps*.

Moreover, theſe orders injure ſociety by the diſcouragement they offer to uſeful occupations. Nobility, and men of large fortune having the excluſive privilege of idleneſs, and ſetting the faſhion of the times, their ſervile herd of imitators in all the inferior claſſes of ſociety, are tempted like them to regard laborious induſtry as degrading; incom-

patible with gentility as well as nobility. Hence the proud and inſolent contempt ſo common toward the laborious inhabitants of thoſe countries, where hereditary monarchs and nobles form, (as Mr. Burke ſomewhere calls them,) the ornamented corinthian capital of the political column.

Again, theſe orders are detrimental to the general welfare, becauſe the baneful ſyſtem of *primogeniture* is entailed upon them as neceſſary to their exiſtence: neceſſary to counteract the natural tendency of theſe orders to ſelf-deſtruction from the effects of luxury, extravagance, and diſſipation. Hence a diſcouragement to population, from the expedient celibacy of the younger children.

Again; in every community thoſe who do not actually labour, muſt be maintained by the ſuperfluous produce of thoſe who do; the privileged orders, therefore, who are for the moſt part the drones and butterflies of ſociety, *fruges conſumere nati*, encreaſe the burthenſome claſs of unproductive inhabitants, and are therefore an addition to the quantity of labour neceſſary from the induſtrious.

Theſe privileged claſſes promote inequality of *fortune* as well as rank in a ſtate; they have a direct tendency, (of which the effect is always produced when not counteracted) to divide a nation into two grand parts, the rich and the poor—Such is the caſe in Ruſſia, Spain, and Portugal, and was the caſe in France; and would be the caſe here, if a variety of cauſes peculiar to this country, did not prevent the full effect of this evil tendency among the privileged orders. Even at preſent the over grown wealth of a rich commoner, always carries him within the vortex of nobility, where he is at length engulphed. The depreſſion, ſervility, and baſeneſs of ſpirit on the one hand, and the haughty demeanor and oppreſſive conduct on the other, which this ſyſtematic inequality of rank and fortune never fails to produce, are too obvious and notorious to need more than the bare mention. It is on the one ſide a voluntary, and on the other, a compulſive degradation of the human ſpecies.

But theſe orders are ſtill farther detrimental to ſociety, becauſe they live and flouriſh upon national *ignorance*. If the multitudes who compoſe the lower claſs of the community, were ſufficiently inſtructed in the plaineſt principles of politics, and ſufficiently aware of the moſt obvious means of purſuing their own intereſts, they never would

 voluntarily

voluntarily adopt a ſyſtem ſo repugnant in its theory to both. It is therefore the intereſt of theſe orders that the bulk of ſociety ſhould be carefully taught to abſtain from all political diſcuſſion or converſation—that their hours ſhould be ſpent in labour without intermiſſion, and that no leiſure ſhould be afforded for mental improvement—that they ſhould be taught to reverence the titled order as a claſs of ſuperior beings, and to adopt with implicit ſubmiſſion, the political creed, of their ſelf-created rulers. Thus are the mental faculties enchained, the childhood of ſociety prolonged for ages, and the progreſſive improvement of the ſpecies unnaturally retarded.—Mr. Burke ſeems perfectly aware of this abſolute neceſſity of national ignorance to the due maintenance of the privileged orders, as appears by the following curious note inſerted in page 85 of Sir Brook Boothby's Obſervations on Mr. Burke's appeal. "In a Letter to a certain French *emigrant*, ſpeaking of the affairs of the Low Countries, our author is reduced to a curious dilemma. He is obliged to give ſome ſort of deciſion between a monarch, an imperial monarch and his monks, on this point, *il ſuggere** (for it is in French that this Letter appears) *aux conſeillers de l'Empereur de ne point detruire les prejugés dont un homme habile ſait tirer parti pour le gouvernement: de ne pas exciter les hommes à fouiller trop ſcrupuleuſement dans les baſes des anciens opinions* DE PEUR *que la plupart d'entre eux ne voient bientot que les Monarques ne ſont pas plus utiles á la Societe que les Moines; mais d' oublier un fois pour toutes l' immenſe Encyclopedie et Bibliotheque des Oeconomiſtes, et de revenir tout bonnement aux anciennes principes* (the principles of monkery and abſolute monarchy). "That it might be for the advantage of princes and prieſts to replunge the world into ignorance and barbariſm, is perhaps true; but when the learned gentleman adviſes

* I think it worth while for the ſake of my Engliſh readers, to give the meaning of this machiavelian paſſage; it is as follows. "He (Mr. Burke) ſuggeſts to the adviſers of the emperor, not to deſtroy thoſe prejudices which a ſkilful ſtateſman well knows how to turn to the advantage of government: not to excite men to ſearch too ſcrupulouſly into the foundation of ancient opinions, *for fear* leſt the greater part among them ſhould quickly find out, *that monarchs are of no more uſe to ſociety than monks*; but rather to forget once for all, that immenſe Encyclopædia and library of the oeconomiſts, and to return in good earneſt to the old principles."—The oeconomiſts are a claſs of philoſophers ſo called, who have laboured moſt ſucceſsfully to enlighten Europe in general, and the French nation in particular, on the theory of politics and political oeconomy.

"kings

" kings to forget what they have learned, he does not ſeem " to recollect, that they cannot at the ſame time command " their ſubjects to unlearn what they have once known. " When men have begun to think for themſelves, when " they have carried their temerity of free thinking, perhaps " ſo far as to ſuſpect that nations may exiſt without *monks* " or *tyrants*, it is already too late to burn libraries or phi- " loſophers. See *Lettre de M. Burke ſur les affaires de* " *France et des Pays-bas addreſſée à M. le Vicomte de Ri-* " *varol. Traduite de l'Anglois.*"

I cannot forbear another quotation on the abſolute neceſſity of public *ignorance*, to the ſucceſs of fraud and impoſition, although it relates to a claſs of privileged orders which I have not hitherto particularly noticed. It will furniſh alſo a parallel to the famous paſſage in Mr. Burke's reflections, where he ſo courteouſly mentions " the hoofs of the ſwiniſh multitude." (i. e. the people.)

Henry Knyghton, a *canon* of Leiceſter, complains heavily of Wickliff, (the reformer) his neighbour and contemporary, " for having tranſlated out of Latin into Engliſh, " the goſpel which Chriſt had entruſted with the clergy " and doctors of the church, that *they* might miniſter it " to the laity and weaker ſort, according to the exigency " of times and their ſeveral occaſions: ſo that by this means " the goſpel jewel or evangelical pearl was made *vulgar*, " was thrown about and trodden under foot of *ſwine*. " (Lewis Hiſt. of tranſlations of the bible, p. 20. 1729. " Sylva, p. 319.)"

Thus we find that public ignorance is the cement of the far famed alliance between church and ſtate; and that impoſture, political and religious, cannot maintain its ground, if knowledge and diſcuſſion once find their way among the *ſwiniſh multitude*. Hence we have a clue to the true ſource of proſecutions for libel, and public proclamations againſt conſtitutional ſocieties, and ſeditious correſpondences! But myſtery cannot laſt for ever; its day is far ſpent, and we have now the touchſtone, the ſhibboleth, by which the real friends of the people may always and certainly be known: thoſe who mean well to the people ſay, " think for your- " ſelves, read for yourſelves, decide for yourſelves: try all " things, and hold faſt that which is good; you are the moſt " concerned in what relates to your own intereſt, and " wherever you place *implicit* confidence, ſooner or later

" you

" you will infallibly be deceived."—The other ſide, on the contrary, take this for their text, and preach this for their doctrine, " You (the people) have nothing to do with po-
" lities; leave that to your rulers, they know beſt what is
" good for you; you have no need to think for yourſelves,
" pay your tythes and taxes quietly, and they will take
" care to think for you."

Fellow citizens, thus are you cajoled:—Swine they call you, and ſwine in underſtanding they would gladly make you: it is your own fault if they ſucceed.

To the *morals* of a people theſe orders are dangerous, becauſe they ſhew that honours and rewards are not appropriated as they ought to be, to abilities and virtue, and that they are not incompatible with ignorance and vice. They raiſe the fortuitous circumſtances of wealth and birth, above the poſſeſſions of qualities the moſt uſeful to mankind. Thus public admiration is diverted from thoſe objects to which alone it ought to be directed, and laviſhly ſquandered on perſons by whom it has never been earned. Is it not ſurpriſing that ſuch a form of government ſhould have its defenders among thoſe who deem public virtue worthy of attention? a form of government, where intrinſic merit is ſyſtematically degraded, and defrauded of its due ſhare of public approbation?

Theſe orders are further dangerous to morals, becauſe they induce the perſons who compoſe them, to indulge in thoſe vicious exceſſes to which wealth of itſelf too frequently furniſhes the temptation and the means. Their hereditary claim to public homage and reſpect, is a ſet-off againſt the diſguſt which vice would otherwiſe occaſion, and they know by experience that a ſmall portion of real merit, will entitle nobility to a large ſhare of public praiſe. Herein, as in other commodities, the value encreaſes in proportion to the rarity.

But it is not merely that the motives to vice are ſtrengthened, and thoſe to virtue ſuppreſſed among the privileged orders themſelves, but the farther misfortune is, that the eyes of the people are turned upon them as upon a ſuperior race of beings, and the inferior ranks of the community, are every where too prone to follow the examples furniſhed by their *betters*—a proſtitution of language which tells more than a volume, and is ſufficient of itſelf to demonſtrate the baneful effects on public morals, which this

ſyſtem

ſyſtem invariably produces. It is thus that luxury, idleneſs, and prodigality are ſanctified; and exhibited to the public in all the decorations which ſhould be appropriated to virtue alone. No wonder the multitude are dazzled, and blindly led to imitate the prominent qualities of their *ſuperiors!*

Moreover theſe orders deſtroy that ſpirit of independance and ſelf-eſteem ſo eſſential to a firm and even tenor of virtuous conduct, and ſo productive of good and of great actions: and they create and promote thoſe habits of meanneſs and ſervility in every claſs, which contaminate the genuine ſources of virtue, and ſuppreſs all the nobler feelings of the ſoul. Even learning and abilities in every nation have been infected by this contagious ſpirit of public ſervility, and have baſely contributed to faſten the chains of mental degradation. Hiſtorians and orators, poets and prieſts, have, in all ages and places, enliſted in this inglorious ſervice, and ſwelled the long catalogue of thoſe, who (as EVELYN § very properly expreſſes himſelf,) "blaſpheme for bread," We need not, however, wander out of our own times or our own country for illuſtration of theſe remarks; but for the honour of the human character I hope, the next generation will read with a deep bluſh the deſpicable adulation of *Engliſhmen* in their addreſſes on the king's recovery. Well might the flattered monarch have exclaimed with TIBERIUS, *O homines ad ſervitutem parati!*

To the *ſafety and tranquillity* of a nation theſe orders are dangerous: quarrelling almoſt inceſſantly with each other, or with the people, or with their neighbours, war, domeſtic and foreign, is (I may venture to ſay) excluſively attributable to the privileged orders.—War they create; by war they were created.*

For

§ Diſcourſe on Medals. p. 82.

* "As to the nobility of modern Europe, what where they in their "origin? The chiefs of ferocious warriors, who united barbarity of conqueſt "with barbarity of manners; whoſe firſt rights were thoſe of uſurpation and "plunder, and who founded their pre-eminence merely on the command "which they exerciſed in war. Thus was the field of battle the nurſery of this nobility; a ſingular, a ſtriking, and an alarming feature of reſemblance with the order of Cincinnati.

"Hence iſſued that ſwarm of counts, and dukes, and marquiſſes, which "overran and deſolated Europe All thoſe titles of human vanity, were in "their origin nothing more than military titles, denoting different degrees of command, but ſoon they became ſplendid diſtinctions and privileges

For facts of the martial quarrels of these hereditary monarchs and nobles, we need not travel out of this kingdom: let my reader take the trouble of casting his eye over the table of contents of any history of England, and he will, in ten minutes, be furnished with proofs innumerable of the present assertion.

Indeed the annals of every nation upon earth are scarcely any thing more, than accounts of war and bloodshed occasioned by kings, and nobles, and priests; where the people have been the miserable victims of ambition and persecution, and have been led without remorse, like beasts to the slaughter. If, indeed, these hereditary scourges of the human race, had been confined in their mutual quarrels to the mutual destruction of themselves only, mankind would have been no loosers; but the people have, on all occasions, been the wretched dupes of their ambitious leaders, and have verified in all ages the truth of the poet's remark, *Quicquid delirant Reges, plectuntur Achivi.*

But in this, as in most other cases, the transactions of our own country will furnish abundant illustration of the remarks I have made: nor is it necessary for the present purpose to trace the sanguinary paths of heroes * and great men of former times, or other nations, or refer my reader to the multitude of royal and noble plunderers, whose devastations croud the page of ancient and modern history, and compose the melancholy chronicle of human misery. It will suffice, as I have just observed, to cast an eye over the table of contents of any history of England; and scarce a chapter will be found unoccupied by accounts of intestine ravages or foreign hostilities, to which the ambitious designs of kings and nobles have uniformly given rise.

The quarrels and disputes, (and in most cases the bloody and desolating wars) between William the Norman and Harold; between Henry the Ist. and his brother Robert;

"leges in civil life. Soon they laid the foundation of that barbarous feodal "system, which for ages debased all human kind, converted whole nations "into herds of slaves, and a few individuals into broods of tyrants." Mirabeau's Considerations on the Order of Cieninnatus. p. 11. I ought not to have forgotten this book among those I have mentioned in a former note.

* Heroes are much the same—the point's agreed,
From Macedonia's madman, to the Swede,
The one strange purpose of their lives, to find,
Or make, an enemy of all mankind; (Pope.)

between Stephen and Matilda; between Henry the IId. and his children: between Richard the Iſt. and prince John; between king John and the French prince Lewis; between the young king Henry IIId. and Lewis; between Richard the IId. and the duke of Lancaſter; between the houſes of York and Lancaſter in the reigns of Henry VIth. and Edward VIth; between Edward the Vth. and the duke of Glouceſter; between Richard IIId. and the earl of Richmond; between Henry the VIIth. and Lambert Simnel; between the ſame monarch and Perkin Warbeck; between Mary and lady Jane Grey: between James IId. and Monmouth; between William IIId. George Iſt. and IId. and the family of James IId. all aroſe from diſputed claims to the monarchy of England, and are all referable to the quarrels of our princes among themſelves. Such, with us, have been the *peaceable* effects of hereditary ſucceſſion, ſo vaunted by its penſioned advocates! But the catalogue is not yet finiſhed; for theſe are the diſputes of royal contenders among themſelves, reſpecting the crown of England alone. During the reigns of William Iſt. William Rufus, Stephen, Henry IId. Richard Iſt. John, Henry IIId. Edward Iſt. IId. and IIId. Richard IId. Henry IVth. Vth. and VIth. the blood and treaſure of the people were waſted, and the nation engaged in almoſt perpetual warfare with France, on account of the attempts and pretenſions of our kings either to the dukedom of Normandy, or the French monarchy: and to this very day his moſt ſacred majeſty king George the third, claims, by the grace of God, to be king of Great Britain, *France* and Ireland; defender of the faith, and ſo forth! Where, but among monarchs, can this mockery of common ſenſe be paralleled?

Turning again over the pages of our Britiſh hiſtory I find that during the ſhort intervals when our royal claimants reſted from their ſanguinary labours, and ſuſpended for a while their mutual ſacrifice of a deluded people, the barons, (thoſe minor deſpots, who formed the ariſtocracy of the kingdom,) were ſeldom idle. They miſſed few favourable opportunities of leading out their vaſſals againſt the monarchs; reviving, as occaſion ſerved, the dormant, but never-dying ſtruggle for power between them, or revenging ſome ſucceſsful monopoly on the part of the ſovereign of the precious privilege of extortion and oppreſſion. But it would be tedious, and I hope unneceſſary, to enumerate the re-

peated facts of this nature, with which our hiſtory abounds: the reader will recollect them for himſelf. Humanity, indeed, would wiſh to forget theſe oft-recurring ſcenes of ſlaughter and deſolation, which caſt a gloom over the goodneſs of providence, and almoſt tempt us to aſk, for what ſins of mankind has the earth been ſo frequently delivered up to theſe vicegerents of Pandæmonium? From time immemorial the tranſactions of the privileged orders (never forgetting the prieſthood) have been, for the moſt part, like the code of *Draco*, penned in blood.

Hence, alſo, I omit the various ſtruggles of the *people* againſt the oppreſſion of the privileged orders. We all know the Tylers and Hampdens of their day: we have all read the voluminous details of the evils which were occaſioned by that perfidious deſpot Charles the firſt—that bleſſed martyr whoſe character ſtill forms the annual theme of pious panegyric among the reverend profeſſors of courtly adulation. To all of us theſe facts are known: they have pleaſingly arreſted our attention during youth, but they are mournful and melancholy leſſons for our more reflecting and maturer years. Neither does it ſeem neceſſary to enter into a detail of the riſe and progreſs of the numerous foreign wars in which the nation has been ſucceſſively plunged from the time of William the Norman to the æra of the revolution. It is well known to the moſt ſuperficial reader of Engliſh hiſtory, that almoſt all of them have been excluſively owing to the monarchs on the throne, and their adviſers; and that none of them are excluſively attributable to the people; not even in the two or three ſolitary caſes where they had the apparent ſanction of popular concurrence. In every inſtance, there is full reaſon to believe, that had royal inſtigation been wanting, the wars would have been wanting alſo.

From the revolution to the acceſſion of his preſent majeſty, the foreign wars in which the nation has been involved, have been frequent, bloody, and expenſive. The motives that gave riſe to them are ſo truly and ſo briefly expreſſed by Guthrie*, in a very popular compilation, that altho' the paſſage relates to another ſubject, and was penned for a different purpoſe, and by a monarchical writer, I ſhall exhibit it without ſcruple in illuſtration of my preſent argument.

"In order to take a clear and comprehenſive view of the

* GUTHRIE's Geographical Grammar, 8vo. 1785. p. 295.

"*national debt*, it muſt firſt be premiſed, that after the re-
"volution, when our new connections with Europe intro-
"duced a new ſyſtem of foreign politics, the expences of
"the nation, not only in ſettling the new eſtabliſhment,
"but in maintaining long wars as principals on the conti-
"nent, for the ſecurity of the Dutch barrier; reducing the
"French monarchy; ſettling the Spaniſh ſucceſſion; ſup-
"porting the houſe of Auſtria; maintaining the liberties
"of the Germanic body, and other purpoſes, increaſed to
"an unuſual degree; inſomuch that it was not thought ad-
"viſeable to raiſe all the expences of any one year by taxes
"to be levied within that year, leſt the unaccuſtomed weight
"of them ſhould create murmurs amongſt the people."—
That is in ſhort, our forefathers having ſpent as much of their own property as they choſe to ſpare in theſe quixotic expeditions, took the liberty of ſpending the property of their poſterity. It is impoſſible, however, to doubt, upon the preceding faithful enumeration of the objects of the various wars ſince the revolution, *to whom* we are obliged for them. They are objects which would very naturally enter into the brain of a Dutch ſtadtholder, or a German elector; but the people of England, left to themſelves, would never have looked far enough to think of them, or had folly enough to adopt them.

Coming now to the reign of his preſent majeſty, I muſt conform my language to the conſtitutional law of the land, and ſpeak of the wars of this period, not as owing to the monarch, but the miniſter. Hiſtorians of paſt times, not having the fear of ex-officio informations for libel before their eyes, may tell truth with impunity, and take liberties on behalf of the public, which thoſe who animadvert on the tranſactions of the preſent, muſt, for their own ſakes, cautiouſly abſtain from. In the preſent caſe, indeed, there is no need of them. Thus much we may aſſert, that as kings who chuſe miniſters, cannot but entertain ſome private opinion or other reſpecting thoſe meaſures which obviouſly concern their own power or intereſt, it muſt neceſſarily be a ſtrong recommendation in the choice and continuance of miniſters, that their ſentiments are ſimilar to thoſe of the ſov'reign; or, that whatever their own ſentiments may be, they are willing to run the riſk of public reſponſibility, by ſupporting thoſe meaſures which the monarch individually may approve. If his majeſty has the right (as he has) of chooſing his miniſters,

he

he muſt be guided in his choice by ſome motives or other; and no more obvious motive can be aſſigned than a ſimilarity of ſentiment.* In the debates on the American war, lord George Germain at one time publickly declared, and lord North at another time pretty ſtrongly inſinuated, that altho' they were his majeſty's miniſters, they did not purſue their own meaſures but the monarch's. Language extremely unconſtitutional, however true it might have been in fact. Had Mr. Burke impeached theſe men inſtead of Mr. Haſtings, (and he has abuſed lord North as virulently as Mr. Haſtings) he would have preſerved a little more appearance of conſiſtency. But Mr. Burke is now the right honourable friend and coadjutor of the right honourable lord in the blue ribbon, with whom, at one time, he and Mr. Fox would not dare to truſt themſelves in a room! A truly right honourable coalition; and beautifully illuſtrative of the ſyſtematic inconſiſtency which forms ſo diſtinguiſhing a trait in Mr. Burke's character!

The American war then, that foul blot upon the character of the nation, and which will mark the reign of George the third, as the moſt diſgraceful period of the Britiſh annals, I ſhall treat as the war of the miniſters. A war, notoriouſly commenced for the mere purpoſes of patronage and revenue, in direct oppoſition, not only to the ſpirit of the conſtitution, but to the plaineſt principles of civil liberty and political expedience; and virulently perſiſted in, with circumſtances of deliberate inhumanity till then unknown†! In the comparatively ſhort but mournful ſpace of ſeven years, near one hundred and forty millions ‡ of money were ſquandered, and at leaſt one hundred and twenty thouſand lives ‖ deſtroyed, to gratify the diabolical paſſions of avarice, ambition, and revenge! nor was this all, for there is farther to be added, the mutual loſs which the Engliſh and Americans ſuſtained in their trade and their ſhipping, and the ſtill more grievous calamity which both nations experienced by the long ſuſpenſion of agriculture, commerce and population. Thus it has been in the power of a few men, choſen by the crown, and many of whom

* Et ſapis, et mecum ſentis, et Jove judicas æquo. HOR.

† I allude chiefly to the employment of the Indians, and the merciful manifeſto which threatened the Americans with the *extremes of war*.

‡ I do not include the pecuniary loſs of the Americans.

‖ The Americans compute their loſs at 70,000. GORDON's Hiſt. v. 4. p. 404.

ſtill

ſtill live in the luxurious enjoyment of the wages of iniquity, to throw back the natural courſe of progreſſive improvement in Great Britain and America, for at leaſt half a century! If it be ſaid that theſe facts do not relate to my argument, the American war not being the war of the king but of his miniſters, I am ready to allow, that ſo far from ſpeaking of the king individually, it is not for me to determine whether any, or what part of the American war, is directly or indirectly attributable to the exiſtence even of a *monarchical form* of government in this country. However, as the enumeration of the wars of Great Britain would have been very incomplete without ſome notice of an event of ſuch magnitude, I could not properly omit noticing it. The reader muſt draw his own concluſions from the facts.

I do not think it worth while to dwell on the petty miſchiefs of Mr. *Pitt's* adminiſtration in the article of foreign wars. The commerce of the country, has indeed, been three times wantonly impeded; fleets have been manned without remorſe by the violent meaſure of impreſſing ſailors, and they have been unmanned again without conſideration, and manned again almoſt immediately to be diſcharged in port without having anſwered one purpoſe of public utility; ſome additional millions* alſo have increaſed the burthen of the public debt: and the national character has been diſgraced in the eyes of Europe, by unexecuted threats and unreſented inſults. Such are the laurels which our heaven-born miniſter has won! But theſe are comparatively trifling evils. Youth and ignorance and ſelf-conceit having been placed at the helm of the government, we may thank our good fortune that matters are no worſe. We have miſtaken cunning for wiſdom, and inſolence for ability, and declamation for knowledge—we have preſumed want of vice from want of age, and political honeſty from public profeſſion, and we have been the dupes of our own credulity. Mr. Pitt has outwitted the nation; and I ſhall be much miſtaken, if he does not, in the end, outwit himſelf.

* Between 70 and 80 during 8 years of *peace*. For by the 11th report of the commiſſioners of public accounts preſented in 1784, it appears that lord North left an unfunded debt of about 18 millions and a quarter. The preſent unfunded debt can hardly be leſs than 15 millions. So that the one is nearly a ſet off againſt the other. Mr. Pitt has alſo paid off 9 millions of the public debt, but in return he has added to the annual taxes as appears by "the diſtributions of grants," £2,663,000. If an annuity of 3 per cent will require £90 to pay it off, how much will an annuity of 2,663,000 require?

That

That wars are chiefly owing to the privileged orders, would be a fair concluſion from this circumſtance, if there were no other to corroborate it, that to them Europe is indebted for STANDING ARMIES; the favourite ſyſtem, and at length the perpetual concomitants of monarchical government and hereditary nobility. Kings, thus having the inſtruments of ambition always at hand, are ſubject to the perpetual temptation of uſing them; and Europe knows, by melancholy experience, that a fine army in good diſcipline has too frequently been the cauſe of war*, that otherwiſe might never have exiſted.—With a body of men always ready, whoſe trade is fighting, and of which the moſt active ſpirits burn for an opportunity of ſignalizing themſelves in their *honourable* vocation, it is no wonder that the temptation altogether is ſometimes irreſiſtable. If the fact be denied, that ſtanding armies are kept up for the ſake of being ready to make war when a tempting opportunity preſents itſelf; and if it be aſſerted on the contrary, that they are wholly maintained for the purpoſe of ſelf-defence, my charge is made good in its fulleſt extent; for this proves that the temptation to invade their neighbours, is ſo habitually powerful among monarchs, that each is compelled at an enormous expence to have an army in perpetual readineſs, for the ſake of ſecurity againſt the ambition of the reſt.

Nobility moreover, being diſgraced in its own eſtimation, by the common and peaceable purſuits of honeſt induſtry, and the church and the bench requiring, at leaſt, an appearance of ſtudy, a preſumption of knowledge, and an outward decency of deportment; with which it can hardly be expected that young men of high birth ſhould willingly comply; there ſcarcely remains any other reſource, againſt the laſſitude of idleneſs, to the favourites of PRIMOGENITURE, or againſt the unſeemly alliance of pride and poverty to her victims, than the *Army*. No wonder, therefore, that the military eſtabliſhment of every European ſtate ſhould be ſo large, when it ſerves ſuch uſeful purpoſes to the privileged orders, in whoſe hands are the governments of Europe; and when it forms ſo ſtrong a link of mutual connection between ſovereigns and their nobility. In this country where politics were much bet-

* It may well be ſuſpected that we ſhould never have found it worth while in England, to annihilate the power of Tippoo Saib in India, if our army there and our military governors had not found it out for us.

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ter underſtoood than in any other nation upon earth, before the American and French revolutions, the people have always entertained a well-founded dread of ſtanding armies; which, from the time of Charles the Iſt. to George IId. have been ſubject to frequent ſtruggles between the court and the people. But the privileged orders have at length obtained a complete victory, and the army eſtabliſhment of Great Britain, by the perſevering endeavours of our kings and miniſters, is now voted as a matter of courſe; notwithſtanding the people are cajoled with the parliamentary farce of its being continued only from year to year.

That ſtanding armies are dangerous to the ſafety of every country where they are maintained, is indubitable from all the paſt facts relating to them in ancient and modern hiſtory. Piſiſtratus at Athens, Tyndaridas at Syracuſe, Matho and Spendius at Carthage, thus embroiled or enſlaved their country. At Rome, the army was the alternate inſtrument of ambition to Marius and Sylla, and to Cæſar and Pompey. Auguſtus took care to be appointed governor of all the provinces *where armies were maintained for fear of inſurrections*. Throughout the remaining hiſtory of the Roman ſtate, both in the eaſt and the weſt, we find the empire inceſſantly deluged in blood, by means of the army and Prætorian Guards, who ſet up and dethroned whom they pleaſed *. Let the reader return to modern hiſtory, and peruſe the wars of the Florentines with the German diſbanded army; the depredations of the Spaniards in the Low Countries; the means by which Guſtavus formerly, and the late king of Sweden, in 1772, enſlaved that country; by which prince Maurice attempted the ſame in Holland; by which the French have been held in civil bondage, from the times of Charles VII. and Louis XI. to the preſent day; to ſay nothing of the modern Prætorian Guards—the Janizaries of the Turkiſh empire, and he will have no doubts on the ſubject: if he ſhould have any, let him peruſe the hiſtory of England to remove them; where he will ſee a regular ſyſtematic deſign on the part of our monarchs and their miniſters, to maintain an unneceſſary ſtanding army in time of peace, as a means of ſupporting their power, providing for their dependants, and cruſhing the people. The following ſhort view of the hiſtory of ſtanding armies in our own country, which, with the

* Of 26 Emperors 16 were murdered or depoſed.

aſſiſtance of Trenchard, I have compiled from the hiſtories of the times, will not be unintereſting or irrelevant to the preſent purpoſe.

Richard the Second ſeems to have been the firſt who kept on foot a permanent military; he raiſed 4,000 archers in Cheſhire, and with theſe he ſurrounded and overawed the parliament; he let them looſe to live as free-booters on the people, and connived at every exceſs of rape, robbery, and murder which they committed. In return for theſe ſervices he made Cheſhire a principality: but being compelled to go to Ireland, the people took advantage of his abſence, and he was dethroned.—The next appearance of a ſtanding army, was in Henry the VIIth's time, who, much to the diſcontent of the nation, raiſed and continued the yeomen of the guard.—In England, no farther attempt of this kind was made till the reign of Charles the Iſt, who ſeems to have ſet an example of every ſpecies of deſpotiſm. In Ireland, indeed, there was a ſmall army conſtantly maintained, even in times of peace. In Edward the IVth's time, this was 200 men; in 1535, it was 300; in 1543, 380 horſe and 160 foot.—Under Mary, 1,000; they were increaſed under Elizabeth to 1500 and 2,000, which number they continued till the 15th of Charles Iſt.

In 1627 this king diſperſed all over England the army returned from Cadiz, quartering them even upon private houſes, as it ſuited his intereſt or revenge, eſpecially upon thoſe who refuſed payment of the arbitrary loan impoſed to maintain the army. But the clamours of the people, and the war in which he ſoon after engaged, prevented this evil from becoming ſtationary. In 1628 he ſent for 1000 (Trenchard ſays 3000) German horſe to be quartered upon England, and to ſupport his arbitrary meaſures; "and it muſt be confeſſed," ſays Hume *, "that the king "was ſo far right, that he had now, at laſt, fallen on the "only effectual method of ſupporting his prerogative; "but at the ſame time, he ſhould have been ſenſible, that "till provided with a ſufficient *military force*, all his at-"tempts in oppoſition to the riſing ſpirit of the nation, "muſt in the end, prove wholly fruitleſs." In this year the commons addreſſed upon the grievance occaſioned to the country, by the billeting of ſoldiers, and the enormities of which they were guilty: to remedy this, Charles

* Hiſt. of Eng. v. 6. p. 258.

introduced, of his own authority, martial law among them. Hence the petition of right, preſented the ſame year, complained not only of the grievance above-mentioned, but alſo of this illegal ſtretch of power in the king.

The firſt regular project, according to Trenchard *, for a ſtanding army, was in the year 1629, which "required "only 3,000 foot in conſtant pay to bridle the impertinence of parliaments: to overawe the parliament, and the "nation; to make edicts to be laws; to force upon the "people vaſt numbers of exciſes; and, in ſhort, to overturn the whole frame of this noble Engliſh government. "Whoever has a mind to peruſe that dangerous ſcheme in "Ruſhworth's appendix, p. 12, and what he ſays of it in "his *hiſtory*, will ſee enough."

In Ireland, lord Strafford conſiderably augmented the ſtanding army, and had not the Scots been too quick for Charles, 9,000 Iriſh were to have been ſent from thence to England: and one of the charges againſt Strafford was his advice to Charles to reduce England, by means of the ſtanding army of Ireland: for the judicious patriots of that time did not chuſe to truſt the king with a permanent ſtanding military in England. This very able miniſter of a deſpotic ſovereign, ſaw the uſe of a ſtanding army, and expreſſed his wiſh for an eſtabliſhment of it in England, as appears by his letters, v. 2. p. 60. In 1641, the parliament declared againſt the king's aſſumed power of impreſſing men at will for any ſervice, in conſequence of his having iſſued out commiſſions to raiſe 2,000 foot and 200 horſe in Cheſhire, for his guard. Charles on this, offered to raiſe 10,000 volunteers to ſerve in Ireland. The parliament, however, ſaw through the ſcheme, and refuſed it. In 1642, on the ſubject of the king's complaint againſt the five members, he came with about 300 armed guards, and ſurrounded the Houſe of Commons; but this impolitic conduct anſwered no other purpoſe than to irritate the people againſt him, and the civil war, which commenced this year, made armies neceſſary on both ſides. Notwithſtanding all the inſtances of arbitrary power on the part of this monarch, he always poſſeſſed (as Hume remarks) a great majority in the Houſe of Peers, even after the biſhops were driven away.

* Arguments againſt Standing Armies, Part II.

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The king being made priſoner, the army ſoon found its own power and importance, and began to dictate to the parliament, who had entertained (like good patriots) a deſign of diſbanding a great part of the troops. Theſe, however, obtained poſſeſſion of the king's perſon, marched againſt the parliament, new modelled it at their pleaſure, and eſtabliſhed a legiſlature of their own choice. Theſe violent proceedings were repeated the next year, and at length in 1653 *Cromwell*, who had the army at his beck, by means of it, diſſolved the parliament, and ſeized the government. Purſuing the common ſyſtem of deſpotic rulers, he divided the kingdom into regular military juriſdictions. On the acceſſion of his ſon Richard, another parliament was called; which was alſo diſſolved by the army, who were not ſatisfied till they had depoſed the new protector. The long parliament was then reſtored: this alſo was ſoon expelled from its functions, by the military, who at length ſiding with *Monk*, brought in king Charles the IId.

This ſenſible monarch knew the utility of a ſtanding army to arbitrary power, and therefore was extremely deſirous of keeping on foot the troops that had ſet him on the throne. *Clarendon*, however, without denying his general reaſons, perſuaded the king, that an army ſo accuſtomed to interfere in the government of the country, would not ſuit his purpoſe. The king conſented, and the army was diſbanded, except 4,000 foot and 1,000 horſe, the firſt regular ſtanding army in this country. Charles meant to have kept up the forts in Scotland which Cromwell had erected upon the common principle of curbing the people; but lord Lauderdale (an. 1660) repreſented to him, that it was the loyalty of the Scotch that induced Cromwell to erect theſe forts, and that the time would "probably come, "when the king, inſtead of Engliſh garriſons in Scotland, "would be glad to have Scotch garriſons in England; who, "ſupported by Engliſh pay, would be fond to curb the "ſeditious genius of that opulent nation: and that a peo-"ple, ſuch as the Scots, governed by a few nobility, would "more eaſily be reduced to ſubmiſſion under monarchy, "than one like the Engliſh, who breathed nothing but the "ſpirit of democratical equality." (Hume, v. 6. p. 365.) This courtier-like advice was accordingly adopted; and in return Lauderdale and Middleton ſome time after, contrived that the Scotch ſhould paſs an act, engaging to raiſe

20,000 foot, and as many horſe, to enter at his majeſty's call, into any part of his dominions.

In conſequence of the king's ſpending upon his debts and his pleaſures the money granted by parliament to carry on the Dutch war, de Ruyter was enabled to ſail into the Thames, to burn ſome ſhips at Chatham, and to menace Portſmouth, Plymouth, and Harwich. The king took advantage of this conſternation, not to equip a fleet, but to raiſe an army of 12,000 men. Parliament, was ſummoned in hopes that the preſent diſtreſs would induce them to countenance this meaſure—they met;—and the only vote the commons paſſed, was an addreſs to diſband the army. The court thought fit to comply, and prorogued the parliament till winter. Peace was ſoon after ſigned at Breda, in July 1667. Charles, however, was well convinced that with his views he could govern more eaſily by an army than by a parliament, notwithſtanding the loyal ſpirit of the nation: accordingly, as a pretext was neceſſary, in 1670 means were found in conjunction with France, again to quarrel with the Dutch. The king, dreading the remonſtrances of a parliament, made long and frequent prorogations; and as Hume remarks, "Every ſtep he took in this "affair became a proof to men of penetration, that the war "was intended againſt the religion and liberties of his "ſubjects, even more than againſt the Dutch themſelves." The king by this time had gradually increaſed his guards to about 5,000 men; and this war ſerved as a pretext to raiſe an army of about 12,000, under *general Schomberg*, with the money granted by the commons to diſband the former army, and for the general purpoſes of government. This army, under *Schomberg*, inſtead of being ſent to act with the allies, the French, (with whom in 1670 he had concluded an alliance, and was to receive £.200,000 a year, and 6,000 men in caſe of reſiſtance at home) he encamped on Blackheath, and relying on the aſſiſtance of the French king, he ventured to aſſume a haughty tone towards the parliament. But when the moment of rupture arrived, his courage failed him; and his peers adviſed him to comply with the wiſhes of the commons. Shafteſbury, who had hitherto promoted the arbitrary views of the monarch, now left him, and laid open his deſigns to the leaders of the commons. Among other requeſts, they again addreſſed him to diſband his army as ſoon as the war ſhould be over; Charles gave them

them an evaſive anſwer, not meaning to comply; but at length, his poverty and not his will conſented, and the troops diſbanded themſelves for want of pay. Soon after (Feb. 1674) peace was concluded with the Dutch, but contrary to treaty, Charles ſtill kept up 10,000 men in the French ſervice, to be ready againſt his ſubjects at home. Parliament hardly ever met but they complained of this conduct; and propoſed addreſſes for the recal and diſbanding of theſe troops; which, for a long time, was evaded by repeated prorogations. At length the king did iſſue a proclamation for the purpoſe, which by his dealings underhand he counteracted as much as poſſible. About this time, the king having made peace on the part of England, offered his mediation between the French and the allies, and conſulted ſir William Temple, whoſe advice upon the occaſion is remarkable. "He told his majeſty," ſays Hume, v. 8. p. 7. "very plainly, that he would find it extremely difficult, "if not abſolutely impoſſible, to introduce into England "the ſame ſyſtem of government and religion as was "eſtabliſhed in France, that the univerſal bent of the na- "tion was againſt both.——That in France every circum- "ſtance had long been adjuſted to that ſyſtem of govern- "ment, and tended to its eſtabliſhment and ſupport: *that* "*the commonality being poor and diſpirited were of no account*; "*the nobility, engaged by the proſpect or poſſeſſion of numerous of-* "*fices, civil and military, were entirely attached to the court, and* "*the eccleſiaſtics retained by like motives, added the ſanction of* "*religion to the principles of civil policy.*" Such were the obſervations of this experienced ſtateſman, and well worthy they are of the reader's moſt ſerious reflection. * In Jan. 1678, after ſome adjournments, the parliament met, and the commons agreed to ſupport a war againſt France; they voted among the reſt an army of 30,000 men; but great difficulties were made about this army, which the houſe ſuſpected would be employed more againſt England than France, nor did they ſuſpect without reaſon; for although between 20 and 30,000 men were raiſed in a few weeks, not above 3,000 were ſent out to Flanders, under the duke of

* In 1675 a motion was made and carried in the Houſe of Lords, enjoining a teſt to be taken by members of parliament, &c. in favour of abſolute paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance towards the king, and all that were put in authority under him.—In the beginning of 1677 the commons were firſt regularly divided into the court and country parties; lord Clifford having begun the regular ſyſtem of bribery and corruption to increaſe the power of the court.

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Monmouth; and a few of the yet undiſbanded regiments were recalled for that purpoſe from France. Parliament meeting again in ſummer, the commons, juſtly irritated at this treacherous conduct, paſſed a vote that all troops raiſed ſubſequent to the 29th of September 1677, ſhould be diſbanded: the king made uſe of the lords to wheedle the commons into a compliance with the continuation of the army, then about 24,000 men, but without effect. The parliament met again in November, when the commons finding 57 commiſſions granted to papiſts to raiſe men counterſigned J. Williamſon, they ſent Williamſon to the Tower for this, and for ſaying that the king had a *right* to keep guards if he could pay them. They then voted a ſum to defray the expence of diſbanding the army: and as the king had applied a former ſum granted for the ſame purpoſe, to the *continuing* of an army, they directed this to be paid into the chamber of London inſtead of the exchequer. The lords finding their monarch's intentions thus defeated, took umbrage and quarrelled with the commons. The commons, however, ſtuck to their own meaſures, and complained of the forces ſtill in France; and voted "that the "continuance of any ſtanding forces in this nation, other "than the militia, was illegal, and a great grievance "and vexation to the people." The king after this ſent no more recruits to France, but ſuffered the regiments there, to wear out by degrees. Indeed he was offended with the French, for according to ſir W. Temple, when in 1678, he wiſhed to enter into a private treaty with France, the French king tied him to 8,000 troops in England, and no more: upon this Charles exclaimed, "are all his pro-"miſes to make me abſolute maſter of my people come to "this? Or does he think *that* a thing to be done with 8,000 "men?"—In the latter end of 1678, the long (or penſioned) parliament was diſſolved. In 1679 another parliament was called, of which the commons voted the ſtanding army and the king's guards illegal. "A new pretenſion," ſays Hume, "*but neceſſary for the full ſecurity of liberty and a* "*limited conſtitution.*" (v. 8. p. 106.) Hume (who being a monarchical writer, I quote as often as I can) ſomewhere elſe calls "the army a mortal diſtemper in the Britiſh government, of which it muſt at laſt inevitably periſh."

After this, three other parliaments were ſucceſſively diſ-

ſolved, not ſuiting* the king's deſigns; and for the laſt three years of his reign, he managed without one. Not being able to obtain money from the commons to ſupport the garriſon and fortreſs at Tangiers, this was demoliſhed, and the garriſon being brought over to England, encreaſed the army in 1683-4 to 8412 privates, beſide officers. In Ireland the eſtabliſhment was encreaſed to 7,700.

Soon after the acceſſion of James, the duke of Monmouth laid claim to the crown, but 6 or 7,000 undiſciplined men with him, were defeated by 3,000 regular troops; James never loſing ſight of the common object of his predeceſſors, took occaſion upon this to raiſe the army to 15,000 men, and told the parliament, which was ſummoned in 1685 †, that the militia was altogether uſeleſs. The commons, ſuppliant as they were, thought that as the kingdom had been defended hitherto without the aſſiſtance of a ſtanding army, it might be ſo ſtill; and if the militia was uſeleſs they would make it uſeful, and accordingly they ordered in a bill for that purpoſe. However James prorogued them, and called no other parliament during his reign. Toward the latter end of it, his ſtanding army was encreaſed to 20,000 in England, and to 8,700 in Ireland.

When the convention parliament met under king William, they declared that "the keeping up a ſtanding "army in time of peace without authority of parliament, "was contrary to law." Throughout the whole of king William's reign however, there was a perpetual ſtruggle between him and the commons on this ſubject: and when in 1698 they at length compelled him to diſband his troops, he complained grievouſly of ill uſage, and even threatened to quit his throne. When he gave his conſent to the bill for this purpoſe, (which was carried in the commons by 185 againſt 148, of whom 116 were placemen) the king could not help expreſſing his anger on the occaſion. In apparent compliance with this meaſure, *the men were diſbanded, but the officers were retained.* This flagrant cheat, however, on the part of the monarch, would not ſatisfy the people; and therefore a few regiments were actually

* The lords, however, were, as uſual, the friends of the monarchy: thus the excluſion bill, which in the commons was carried by a large majority, was rejected in the lords by a majority of two thirds (63 to 32). All the *proteſtant* biſhops, except three, voted againſt it.

† This year and this parliament were remarkable for an oppoſition to court meaſures, beginning in the Houſe of Peers, and being moved by a biſhop! (Bp. of London.)

and

and compleatly disbanded, and the rest sent to Ireland, to be ready when occasion offered. But this scheme also was seen through; and the commons required a list of the disbanded troops, which William promised *as soon as he conveniently could*, and the parliament broke up a month after. The king then sent for other foreign regiments, and kept them in Ireland. Indeed this *glorious deliverer*, as it has been the fashion to call him, was not much better than a tyrant and a traitor. See his letter to lord Galway about the army, dated Kingston, Jan. 27, 1698 (Ralph's Continuation of Guthrie, p. 2. p. 808.)

This monarch, as Ralph very properly observes (p. 2. p. 760.) "In his declaration when bidding for the affection and confidence of the people as prince of Orange, "had set forth, that his great purpose was to settle their "liberties on such a foundation that no danger should remain of their relapsing into slavery: and that as soon as "this was done he would send back all his foreign forces. "And yet he was now (1697) contending not only for a "*standing army*, which was incompatible with the security "of these liberties, but for such an intermixture of "*foreigners* among them as aggravated out of measure the "jealousy, which from such a variety of causes had taken "possession of the public. For of these *foreigners* he had "one troop of horse, consisting of 220 men, and one regiment of body guards, consisting of four battalions or "2,670 men. These were *Dutch*. He had also one *Scotch* "regiment of 1,656 men: two regiments of dragoons, "consisting of about 1,400 men, and three of foot, consisting of almost 3,000, all *French* refugees, who had no "other dependence but upon him, and with a very little "court-management might in process of time have been "brought to serve for such *prætorian* bands as served the "worst purposes of the worst Roman tyrants; or the "*Turkish janizaries*, who have no property but their swords, "nor relation to or connection with any one of the human "species but the officers who discipline, and the lord paramount, who pays and commands them." In the letter above referred to (to lord Galway) William proposed to send *secretly* 18 battalions of foot, 3 regiments of horse, and 5 of dragoons to Ireland.

In the very next session the king made another attempt to keep up his Dutch guards, and the court party did their utmost to carry this point in the house of commons, but without

without avail, for the houſe addreſſed the ſovereign on the ſubject; reminding him of his repeated promiſes, and requeſting their diſmiſſion, to which the king reluctantly conſented.

Thus ended the many ſtruggles between William and the Houſe of Commons on the ſubject of a ſtanding army, the latter indirectly conſenting (1698-9) to a compromiſe for 6,000 foot and 4,000 horſe and dragoons, which the £350,000 then voted for the army was computed to maintain, inſtead of 17,656 infantry, and 6,876 horſe, of which the Engliſh military then conſiſted. The king however added 3,000 marines, under pretence of their not being a military corps.

During the reign of queen Anne, till the peace of Utrecht, the nation was engaged in perpetual wars upon the continent for the purpoſe already mentioned; the ſtanding army at home during that time was between 9 and 10,000; after the peace 1713, it was augmented (including invalids) to about 12,000.

In the reign of Geo. Iſt. during the rebellion in 1716, the military eſtabliſhment was encreaſed to 32,000, againſt which the minority-lords entered a proteſt. On the quelling of this rebellion, the famous (or rather infamous) ſeptennial bill was brought in, and paſſed. In 1717 the army was 16,347 (probably beſides invalids, for Walpole this year inveighs againſt the danger of a ſtanding army of 18,000 men. In 1718 he was a violent opponent of the juriſdiction of courts martial.) In 1721 and 1722 there were again proteſts on the mutiny bill, the army in the latter year being 16,449 effective men, and 1,815 invalids. In the next year there was another proteſt, 4,000 having been added to the army and retained. In 1724 the army debate occaſioned another proteſt, and others in 1729, 1730, and the beginning of 1731. At the cloſe of 1731 another proteſt was entered againſt the ſtanding army, and it was moved that the committee ſhould be directed to propoſe 12,000 inſtead of the number intended by miniſtry; but this of courſe was negatived. The year 1732 produced another proteſt on the ſame ſubject. In 1733 the duke of Marlborough brought a bill into the lords to make commiſſioned officers independant of the court, which like all other good motions, was quaſhed by the miniſtry. On this occaſion alſo, the minority lords entered a proteſt. In 1735

the army was augmented to 25,744, which occaſioned likewiſe a proteſt. In 1738 the duke of Newcaſtle had encreaſed the army to 38,000. In 1740 another augmentation was propoſed of 10,325 to 50,515 already on foot, and proteſted againſt by near 40 lords. In the year 1743 we had 23,000 military and 11,550 marines.

All theſe debates in the lords were attended with ſimilar diſcuſſions in the commons; but as uſual to no effect; the ſyſtem of miniſterial bribery which Clifford had introduced in the time of Charles the IId. which William improved, and Walpole perfected; and which, until *the preſent immaculate adminiſtration*, has never been loſt ſight of, prevented any ſucceſsful oppoſition to theſe meaſures of the court. I have omitted for the ſake of brevity, the very important ſtruggles during all this period from the time of Charles II. on the ſubject of COURTS-MARTIAL, but they will deſerve to be traced by thoſe who would form a true judgment of the character and effects of monarchial government.

The military peace eſtabliſhment of Great Britain has not materially varied during this reign. I have not the means of being very accurate, but the following is near the truth; the forces conſtantly maintained in Great Britain are about 18,000—the annual expence of the army eſtabliſhment altogether, is about £1,800,000; and that of the ordnance office for land ſervice, about £450,000.

Sir John Sinclair *, eſtimates the general expences of the peace eſtabliſhment upon the average ſince the revolution as follows:

During the reign of King William	—	1,907,455
Queen Anne	—	1,965,605
George I.	—	2,583,000
George II.	—	2,766,000
George III. Anno 1770 including the Civil Liſt.		4,322,972
Eſtimate of the peace eſtabliſhment in future.		4,937,274

So that our *peace eſtabliſhment* has encreaſed ſince the reign of king William, above THREE MILLION STERLING ANNUALLY! what it will amount to hereafter, God knows.

The expences of the various wars, ſince the revolution, including the amount of the ſupplies raiſed within the year, he gives as follows: †

* Hiſtory of the Public Revenue, 4to. v. 2. page 98. † ibid. p. 99.

expenees

Expences of War during the reign of William III.	30,447,382
Queen Anne — — — —	43,360,003
George I. —— —— ——	6,048,267
Expence of the war begun anno 1739 ——	46,418,689
Ditto of the war begun anno 1756 ——	111,271,996
Ditto of the American war ——	139,171,876
Ditto of the late armament ——	311,385
	£.377,029,598

Let the reader reflect a little on this enormous ſum; and on the uneſtimated and incalculable detriment to agriculture, manufactures, commerce, and population, which theſe wars muſt have occaſioned.—Let him conjecture what the nation might have been; and then let him draw his own concluſions. Of the 18,000 men thus kept up in Great Britain, in time of profound peace, where is the neceſſity for ONE MAN? If our navy is what it ought to be, there can be no invaſion from abroad—If government is what it ought to be, there can be no inſurrection at home—And if his majeſty wants guards, why cannot he, like moſt of his predeceſſors, look upon the people as his guards? When the duke of Alencon came over to England to the court of queen Elizabeth, after admiring the ſplendor of her ‘ court and the conduct of her government, “ but where ‘ are your majeſty's guards?” ſays he. This queſtion ſhe reſolved a few days after, when taking him in her coach through the city, and pointing to the people, who received her in crouds with repeated acclamations, “ theſe “ my lord,” ſays ſhe, “ are *my* guards.”

During the reign of king William, when the power of the French king was the ſtrongeſt; when Louis the XIV. the moſt ambitious monarch of Europe, maintained an army of 450,000 men, and ſo far from being friendly to Great Britain, perſonally hated the monarch on the throne as well as the nation, 10,000 men were the utmoſt that the parliament thought neceſſary; and were it not from a deſire of ending the perſevering attempts of the king to eſtabliſh a military ſyſtem in time of peace, they would probably have deemed half that number more than enough. Now, when we are at peace with all the world, when the only power which could furniſh a pretence for a ſtanding army has taken away every former pretext on her part, we are to maintain 18,000 ſoldiers in Great Britain! The people,

the taxed and oppreſſed people, have a right to know for what purpoſe, and it is to be hoped they will take care to know.

If then, there be no enemies foreign or domeſtic, why this ſwarm of military overunning the land? And why degrade and neglect that noble and conſtitutional defence, the national militia. Is it becauſe an army, being a ſeparate body from the people, have a ſeparate intereſt and an *eſprit de corps*; and that they are blindly ſubſervient to the will of their leaders? while a militia, being part of the nation, feel themſelves citizens as well as ſoldiers, and are therefore not convertible into the inſtruments of arbitrary power? Certainly the ſyſtem now purſued, is open to theſe queſtions and theſe ſuſpicions.

But the expence of a military eſtabliſhment, is far from being the only objection to which it is liable, even ſuppoſing that it had not the other tendencies already mentioned. At home and abroad our ſtanding army during peace, amounts to about 40,000 men. Theſe muſt of neceſſity conſiſt of men in the prime of life, who in the common courſe of things, if they were not ſoldiers would be fathers of families and contributers to the common ſtock of uſeful induſtry and population. But their profeſſion as ſoldiers renders a family extremely inconvenient, if not inſupportable, to at leaſt two thirds of the number, upon a very moderate computation. Forty thouſand ſoldiers, therefore, may reaſonably be computed as a loſs to the national population of at leaſt 50,000 children; and they form beſides an increaſe of *unproductive* inhabitants (beſide the expence of keeping them) to the whole amount in number of the eſtabliſhment.

But celibacy does not eradicate the common propenſities of our nature, and a ſtanding army therefore is from neceſſity, a perpetual eſtabliſhment of national debauchery, for which not the ſoldiers but the government are blameable and accountable. Nor is this the only offence againſt morality to which a military ſyſtem is liable, and I am ſometimes loſt in aſtoniſhment and concern, that any man can voluntarily adopt a profeſſion ſo repugnant to common ſenſe and common humanity; ſo ſlaviſh in its principle and practice, and whoſe ſervices are ſo ill requited. It is too much the faſhion among the writers who wiſh well to their country and to the cauſe of liberty, to inveigh not only againſt the profeſſion but the profeſſors—not only againſt a

ſoldiery,

ſoldiery, but againſt ſoldiers. I am anxious not to be ſuſpected of this intention. I am ſeriouſly of opinion, that in this nation at leaſt, where the army is not formed by tyrannical compulſion, but for the moſt part by voluntary inliſtment, the ſoldiers are the flower of the nation, not merely in form of body, but in qualities of mind. The young men who enter into the army, are obviouſly tempted to prefer the ſeducing occupations of a military life, in conſequence of poſſeſſing naturally a greater flow of animal ſpirits, a greater portion of courage, a more ardent deſire of diſtinction, and ſuperior activity of diſpoſition to their neighbours. They have all the qualities that we expect to find in young men, in a ſuperior degree to the youth of their own ſtanding; and are for the ſame reaſon, more thoughtleſs and inattentive, both to their own intereſt and their moral duties. Unluckily for them, the inſtant they become ſoldiers they are bound by their profeſſion to *think* no more. They are taught to become machines in the hands of their officers, and to pay the moſt ſervile and implicit obedience to the commands of their ſuperiors, of whatever nature they may be. Thus are the mental faculties benumbed, and every good quality of the man, is ſunk in the machine.

Were not this the caſe—were it not that thought and reflection are either totally laid aſide, or ſedulouſly ſuppreſſed, how can we account for a *man* becoming a *ſoldier?* For in the eye of reaſon and reflection, what is a ſoldier? A perſon who profeſſes to renounce all free-agency, to have no will of his own, and ſubmit himſelf, body and mind, to the will of another—whoſe particular trade it is to hold himſelf in readineſs to put his fellow-creature to death, whether friend or enemy, citizen or foreigner, at the command of another, without enquiring into the reaſon or propriety of the command; (for the profeſſional creed, the ſum and ſubſtance of a ſoldier's duty, is *implicit obedience*; it is his buſineſs to *act*, and he permits his commander to *think* for him)—who is contented to adjure all family comfort and domeſtic ſociety—who gives up the character of a citizen for the more honourable title, as he is taught to deem it, of his majeſty's *ſervant*—who in his duty to his commander, ſinks all concern for his duty to his country, being denied the right of inveſtigating the propriety of the orders he receives—who, on his entrance into this voluntary ſtate of permanent ſervitude, renounces the boaſt and

pride

pride of an Engliſhman, *the trial by Jury*, and ſubmits to the judgment, not of his equals, who could feel for his ſituation when accuſed, but of his ſuperiors, who decide too frequently on offences which they never can experience the temptation to commit. The puniſhments of a ſoldier are ſevere and degrading; his duties ſervilely obedient; and to crown the whole, his wages far too ſmall for comfortable ſubſiſtence, and below the common average of an induſtrious day labourer. Thus renouncing his duties as a man, and his rights as an Engliſhman—thus living in a perpetual ſtate of mental degradation—always ill paid in proportion to his labour, and frequently ill provided when his daily taſk is over—cajoled with the title of "gentleman," that his vanity may be made ſubſervient to the intereſt of his employers—and flogged like a ſlave when he deſerts from a profeſſion which a man of ſpirit and reflection can with difficulty approve—he lives, uncomfortably to himſelf, and unprofitably to the community—a character hardly to be blamed, but much to be pitied. I have no doubt whatever but the time approaches, when the nations of Europe will ſee their true intereſt in the mild ſyſtem of peace on earth and good-will toward men, and that a ſoldier will be unneceſſary and unknown. Till that time comes, it is much to be wiſhed that the ſituation of the military ſhould be made leſs degrading and more comfortable: that they ſhould be better paid, and better fed, and better taught: they ſhould be permitted to know that a ſoldier ought to be a citizen, and that although the perpetual ſervitude of one man to another man is degrading to the human character, the ſervitude of a citizen to his country, is of all employments the moſt honourable, and of all duties the moſt ſacred. I hope moſt devoutly that the time may never come, in this country, when a national ſtruggle between oppreſſion on one ſide and freedom on the other, muſt be decided by the fate of arms—I am now, to the beſt of my judgment and abilities, labouring to prevent the poſſibility, by urging a timely reform in thoſe errors and abuſes in the government of the country that are too notorious to be defended or denied: but if that time of national diſaſter ſhould arrive, I truſt the ſoldiers of Great Britain will feel their rights as men, and their duties as Engliſhmen, and become not the enſlavers, but the protectors of their country.

I have dwelt thus long on the ſubject of *ſtanding armies*, becauſe I think it an object of very great national importance, about which *the people are aſleep*. For my own part, I ſhould be puzzled to aſſign one good reaſon for the maintaining of one regiment throughout Great Britain at this preſent moment; when at the ſame time it ſeems to be taken for granted, that we cannot do without 18,000 men.*

The preceding facts relating to a ſtanding army, lead me farther to remark, that theſe privileged orders are alſo dangerous to public tranquillity from their ſyſtematic oppoſition to the claims of the people, and *to all peaceable propoſals of improvement and reformation*—Having, for the moſt part, the power of the ſtate in their own hands, and having a common intereſt in oppoſing all *innovations* but ſuch as they make themſelves, and connive at for their common benefit, they are enabled to treat with inſolent contempt or affected indignation, the well-founded clamours of the multitude, and to ſuppreſs all attempts on the part of the people to meliorate their condition, or ſtem the torrent of public corruption. Thus they proceed till oppreſſion can no longer be borne, and the dreadful remedy of inteſtine war, is the only reſource to which the nation can fly. For the moſt part on ſuch occaſions, the people have only changed one ſet of tyrants for another! America and France have taught the world that the only revolution worth making, is a revolution not for the ſake of princes, but of principles, not of men but of maxims.

"For a nation to change the form of its government, (ſays M. LA FAYETTE), "it is ſufficient that ihe wills it." with reſpect to the right, this is univerſally true; but the practice is attended with danger, and with difficulty, where hoſtile corporations of privileged orders are ever on the watch againſt public liberty, and ever ready to defend their iniquitous claims, againſt the requiſitions of the people †. In America, where the people are not a herd of *ſubjects* to any privileged order; where they are not governed by hereditary rulers, who have ſeparate intereſts from thoſe of the

* I believe the military are uſually inliſted for life, while the army is only legally from year to year. Quere. Whether any inliſtment is valid beyond the period when the exiſting mutiny-bill expires? Is it not worth while for the ſoldiers to enquire into this?

† La conſtitution Angloiſe que vous vantez pardeſſus tout, eſt elle autre choſe qu'un complication de chaines aſſez artiſtement combinées aſſez adroitement deguiſées, pour que le poids en ſoit preſqu' inſenſible au Peuple? Mais

the nation, but by their own immediate agents and repreſentatives, whom they continue no longer than while they do their duty, ſuch changes and improvements in their reſpective governments, as circumſtances make neceſſary, are frequent and eaſy; accompliſhed without oppoſition or diſturbance; and tho' ſuch as would ſhake an European nation to its centre, are hardly known in Europe. While with us, the privileged orders are tremblingly alive to the danger of *innovation*; they view every inlet of political knowledge with a jealous eye and menacing aſpect, and they cling to the moſt flagrant abuſes, as to the moſt ſacred of rights.

No reflecting man can look back at the laſt half century, or conſider the probabilities of the next, without ſeeing clearly that the revolution of Europe is at hand. In this country as in others, the day of reformation muſt come. The true friends of the people, aware of the danger that muſt inevitably enſue from a long continuance of privileged obſtinacy, cry out for early and peaceable reformation. For the ſake of theſe orders, it is to be hoped they will not cry out in vain; leſt tired with increaſing oppreſſion, and bending under the burthen of public ſervitude, an irritated people may *demand* a reſtoration of their long-loſt rights, and kings, and biſhops, and nobles, be irrevocably ſwept away in the dreadful torrent of public reſentment.

Moreover this hereditary ſyſtem of privileged orders is *unjuſt* as well as dangerous. The people, if they were willing, have not the right to create any power whatever which ſhall be independant of themſelves; they cannot give that

Mais reponéez-moi, appellez-vous *Liberté* un état dont le peuple ne pourroit ſortir que par violence, ſi telle etoit ſa volonté? Une nation eſt elle *libre*, quand l'inſurrection eſt la ſeule voie qui lui ſoit ouverte pour changer le forme du gouvernement auquel elle eſt aſſujettie? Il y a tres-loin de la *volonté* de la majorité a l'*acte* de l'inſurrection. Il faut que le beſoin du changement ſoit extreme, pour que cette volonté ſe manifeſte bien hautement, pour que les hommes eclairés puiſſent en juger les effets, et pour que les plus hardis donnent le ſignal de la rupture. Le gouvernement qui a en ſa poſſeſſion la force publique, a tous les moyens d'arrêter le premieres ſecouſſes, et de prevenir un eclat general. Entre la volonté d'une nation paiſiblement et legalement interrogée et le colére d'un peuple qui briſe violemment un gouvernement inſupportable, la diſtance eſt immenſe. C'eſt la difference qui exiſte entre un homme jouiſſant de ſa liberté naturelle, et un eſclave furieux qui rompt ſes fers pour les reprendre. Vous conviendrez bien que ſi la majorité du peuple Anglois ne vouloit plus ni roi ni chambre-haute, il faudroit verſer dix fois plus de ſang pour detruire ces deux inſtitutions ariſtocratiques que pour renverſer á Conſtantinople toute la puiſſance du grand Seigneur. (De la Proprieté dans ſes Rapports avec le Droit Politique. 18mo. p. XII.)

that authority which they do not poſſeſs. It muſt be allowed that (unleſs in the caſe of uſurpation, which ſets the impropriety of privileges beyond doubt), theſe orders cannot be created but by the voice of the majority, and for the good of the majority: if they anſwer not the end of their creation, the reaſon of their continuance fails: and therefore ſo far from claiming a right to exiſt independant of the will of the people, they *ought not* to exiſt at all. But whether they do anſwer the purpoſe of their creation or not, can only be decided by the ſentiments of the majority for whoſe good they were created. So that in all caſes they muſt of right be amenable to the will of the community, as the ſole judge of the propriety of their continuance.

" I would aſk (ſays a French writer already quoted *) " how will you manage to create theſe *independent* powers? " Of what elements and materials are the people compoſed, " that they can produce from their body powers which " ſhall become *independent* of them? How can they give " a pre-eminence to any one, which they have no right to " take away? In ſhort, by what means can a minority " of any kind acquire an *independence* of that majority from " which it originally derived its authority?

" You muſt allow, that for the purpoſe of obtaining " theſe powers *independent* of the people, you muſt have " recourſe to ſomething ſuperior to the people; for you will " never perſuade them that they have given exiſtence to a " power which they cannot annihilate. You muſt therefore call in the divine right, or ſome other imaginary " authority, as a foundation for theſe *independent* inſtitutions, to furniſh a title that they may at all times hold " out to the nation when it thinks fit to conteſt this aſſerted *independence*. Kings and ariſtocrates, do what " they will, muſt found their rights on a commiſſion from " the deity, or on the choice of the people. In the firſt " caſe I ſhall willingly acknowledge their *independence* on " the indiſpenſible condition that they ſhew me their delegation from on high: in the other caſe, they are no more " than the *Delegates of a Democracy.*"

" But they have at all times held this laſt title in ſuch " dread and abhorrence, that they have ſpared no pains to " aſſume the other; and for greater ſurety herein, they

* De la Proprieté, p. III.

" have always connected *God* and the *ſword*. Theſe two " words contain a compleat hiſtory of the human race, " from the moſt ancient annals to our own day; and the " armed theocracy ſtriving againſt the indeſtructible ſenti- " ment of natural equality, offers an abridgement of all the " revolutions of empires."

But if the people cannot have a right to create powers and privileges irrevocable and uncontroulable by *themſelves*, ſtill leſs have they a right to create ſuch powers and privileges deſcendible in hereditary ſucceſſion, at the expence of and uncontroulable by *poſterity*. All government is or ought to be inſtituted for the happineſs of the people who ſubmit to be governed; but as it is impoſſible for the preſent generation to put themſelves exactly in the ſituation wherein the next generation will be, the preſent cannot be the proper judges of what will beſt conduce to the happineſs of the next—poſterity alone will be in poſſeſſion of the facts neceſſary to decide upon the means to this end, and therefore poſterity alone can judge for itſelf.

Alſo, for the ſame reaſons that the preſent generation has a right to purſue its own judgment and inclination, the next will have the right to do the ſame. Neither can any good argument be aſſigned, why every ſucceeding generation, to the end of time, ſhould be controuled by the preſent, even ſuppoſing that knowledge and experience were not progreſſive.—Judging, therefore, from theoretical reaſoning, hereditary privileges and functions are void, *ab initio*, being eſtabliſhed by incompetent authority at the beſt.

Theſe privileged orders are alſo unjuſt to the *community*, becauſe they form a monopoly of public functions, more or leſs extenſive: and it is well known that where buſineſs is to be done, it is beſt done with competition; and always comparatively ill done by thoſe who are careleſs of public approbation, becauſe independent of public opinion. Hence the people are deprived of the benefit which would ariſe from employing men of known abilities and experience in offices now filled by hereditary claimants. In thoſe caſes of hereditary privileges, where there are no functions to be fulfilled—no duties to be performed—where they are the mere ſinecures of ariſtocratic vanity, the injuſtice is ſtill more glaring.

They are unjuſt alſo to *men of experience and abilities*, who are thus ſhut out from the common chance of ſucceeding

ceeding to the political functions for which their talents and their ſtudies have beſt fitted them; and deprived, in a great meaſure, of the due reward of meritorious attainment.

Moreover "as wiſdom cannot be made hereditary, power ought not;" for the ſole reaſon of conferring the one, is the preſumed exiſtence of the other. But this cannot be rationally preſumed in the caſe of hereditary ſucceſſion, and the preſumption, if not directly contrary to, is utterly unſupported by common experience.

Farther this ſyſtem of privileged orders is ſupported by that execrable violation of the plaineſt dictates of natural affection, of juſtice and humanity, the law of *primogeniture*. A law, by which the ties of domeſtic union are broken, and every child but the firſt-born, unfeelingly doomed to indigence and dependance, that the eldeſt may ſupport the family pride in all the ſplendour of luxurious oſtentation. It is impoſſible to calculate the ſum of benefit prevented, and evil occaſioned, by the prevalence of this iniquitous ſyſtem. The maſs of induſtry and exertion that would neceſſarily have been produced by the equal diviſion of large fortunes among the children of rich families would long ago have doubled in all probability the wealth and proſperity of Europe. It would have added, and would ſtill add, to the productive inſtead of the unproductive claſs of inhabitants, to the bees inſtead of the drones of the hive; it would ſoon render idleneſs unfaſhionable, and luxury impoſſible; it would contribute to the ſolid enjoyment of life, by a general ſubſtitution of comforts and conveniences for glitter and parade; it would cut off from the ſources of vice by the diſcouragement of celibacy, and it would encourage population becauſe induſtry is patrimony; it would encreaſe domeſtic felicity, for affection and not avarice would lead our youth to the altar, and the ſeeds of envy and jealouſy, of filial diſobedience and fraternal diſſention would be nouriſhed no more; perſonal ſtrength and national beauty would be gainers by the change, for peace and plenty, and moderate labour would preſent their ruddy offspring to the ſtate, and the friends of mankind would leſs frequently commiſerate the ghaſtly progeny of effeminate indulgence, debauchery and diſeaſe. Thus might our waſtes be cultivated, agriculture ſupported, manufactures improved, and commerce extended. The axe indeed would be laid to the root of ariſtocratic genealogy, and hereditary

privilege would mourn over the loſs of her coadjutor, and would ſicken and decay when unſupported by the ſiſter-aid of primogeniture; but the future generation, freed from theſe canker-worms of ſociety, would joyfully celebrate the period of internal proſperity and external peace; and exclaim with the poet,

" En nova progenies, et rerum naſcitur ordo ;"

Such are the objections to the THEORY of *privileged orders*; and for the reaſons I have thus given in the preceding pages, and others of a ſimilar tendency to be met with in the books I have quoted, I ſhould moſt aſſuredly lift up my voice againſt the admiſſion of this ſyſtem in whole or in part, wherever a *new form of government* ſhould be propoſed, under which it would be my lot to become a citizen. I have adduced inſtances of illuſtration from Engliſh hiſtory in preference, becauſe if the privileged orders be of ſome uſe, and of ſlight detriment any where, it is in this country: if they will bear examination under any, they ſurely will under the boaſted *Britiſh* conſtitution. It is in this country, therefore, that they are to be viewed under their moſt favourable aſpect—here, where we rejoice in poſſeſſing a *limited* monarchy, and make it our pride and boaſt that hereditary functions and diſtinctions are checked and balanced, and controuled—not left to the free courſe of thoſe obvious tendencies which the theory of them would indicate, but confined as far as political foreſight could confine them within the pale of public utility. I grant that in proportion as they are thus controuled, they are leſs detrimental here than in other countries, and perhaps, productive of as much occaſional utility as the nature of them will permit. But here and every where, they appear to me, to poſſeſs much more influence than neceſſity will warrant, and they are chiefly indebted for their preſent exiſtence to the peaceable temper and compriſing ſpirit of the times.

I ſhould not be much ſurpriſed, nor (for my own ſake) ſhould be much concerned, if the preſent adduction of facts and arguments reſpecting the theory of government, ſhould be tortured into a LIBEL on the Britiſh conſtitution. Even while I have been penning this vindication of a meaſure which I ſhall always conſider as honourable and praiſe worthy, the name of our gracious ſovereign (if public conſtruction

ſtruction be well-founded) *has been moſt impudently and atrociouſly perverted to the baſe purpoſes of* CALUMNY *and* FALSEHOOD againſt Mr. Watt and myſelf, in the late proclamation. I am well aware, and I willingly admit, that under the preſent conſtitution of Great Britain, no public meaſure whatever is perſonally attributable to his majeſty, and I attribute none to him; otherwiſe I might be tempted to pay ſome reſpect even to this malevolent, but contemptible performance; as it is, it deſerves none. Malevolent and contemptible I call it, for what but malevolence could dictate a publication ſo evidently fitted to prejudice and inflame the public againſt actions right in themſelves, and not forbidden by the law, and againſt perſons of unblemiſhed character, and acting from the beſt intentions. Contemptible it is, becauſe it exhibits the weakneſs as well as the malignity of thoſe who framed it; and ſo compleatly has it counteracted its own intentions by encreaſing the circulation of thoſe writings to which it alludes, and the reputation of thoſe perſons whoſe characters it attacks, that there is little doubt of Mr. Burke having been conſulted on the occaſion. Had the correſpondencies alluded to in the proclamation been ſeditious in reality, as they are falſely called in that paper, there is little doubt but the engines of the law would have been ſet to work againſt them long ago; and with reſpect to thoſe, entered into by Mr. Watt and myſelf, on the part of the Mancheſter ſociety, the reader ſhall have an opportunity of judging for himſelf. I think the time is not far diſtant when the people, however miſtaken they may be at preſent, will regard it as we do now, an honour conferred on Mr. Watt and myſelf, that public report has connected our names on this occaſion with that of THOMAS PAINE.

The world however begins now to ſuſpect that the preſent tender concern for the BRITISH CONSTITUTION is carried to a very imprudent, at leaſt, if not to a very unwarrantable exceſs. In the faſhionable ſyſtem of political botany, it is a ſenſitive plant, ſhrinking from the ſlighteſt breath of enquiry; and therefore ſtrongly fenced round from too cloſe an inſpection, with the thorns and briars of the law; while the attorney general, like the angel of puniſhment at the gate of paradiſe, guards the entrance into this holy ground, and brandiſhes an *ex officio* information to ſtrike terror into the heart of each bold intruder. We are required

quired to take upon truſt the MYSTERIES of this far-famed conſtitution; and to ſubſcribe the political infallibility, not only of our miniſters for the time being, but of our anceſtors alſo, "from time whereof the memory of man "runneth not to the contrary." The more extravagant and more numerous the abſurdities we conſent to believe, the greater our merit; and we are taught to know that in ſtate as in church, where reaſon ends, faith begins.

"But heretics there are (Mr. Burke calls them atheiſts) "in politics as well as religion," who affect to believe only upon conviction—who are convinced only upon enquiry—and who think the public have a right to the full benefit of their inveſtigations, upon ſubjects in which the public are ſo deeply concerned. To ſuch men, and to the world, ſome more convincing arguments muſt be adduced than are contained in the angry manuſcripts of an information for libel. This will have no other effect than to augment the evil, to excite enquiry, and like the old eccleſiaſtical argument of fire and faggot, (diſuſed but not diſmiſſed) to encreaſe the number of heretical unbelievers. For my own part, I cannot conceive what a conſtitution is good for, whoſe principles will not bear examination; nor how that country can be free, where men are to be puniſhed for peaceably endeavouring to point out to their fellow-citizens the ſeeming errors and defects in the government under which they live. I cannot conceive how any improvement could ever have taken place, if this ſyſtem of ſtate-inquiſition had been rigouroufly purſued; or how any improvement can take place hereafter if all ſources of information are thus for ever to be cloſed. If a man excites his fellow-citizens to revolt, he muſt take the conſequences of his boldneſs or his temerity; but if he barely excites them to examination and enquiry, deſpotiſm alone can treat him as a delinquent. Even though he ſhould ſpeak of abuſes in terms of honeſt indignation proportionate to their enormity, it ſeems to me that he does no more than a ſerious belief of the charges he advances would incite him to do; and while he recommends thoſe peaceable means of reformation which the law and the conſtitution have regularly authorized, who can charge upon him his patriotiſm as a crime? Thoſe, and thoſe only, are *libelliſts* of the conſtitution, who prohibit diſcuſſion; who puniſh inveſtigation; who reply to facts by a fine, and to arguments by the pillory;

pillory; and who, like the true ſlave-drivers of deſpotiſm, ſtand ready with the laſh of the law, to flog the ſaucy ſons of enquiry into torpid apathy and quiet ſubmiſſion.

But notwithſtanding I have thus ſtrongly ſtated the objections that occur to me againſt the theory of privileged orders, and their admiſſion into a new formed ſtate, the queſtion is very different with reſpect to this country where they have exiſted for ages, and ſtill exiſt under circumſtances (as I have before admitted) leſs detrimental to public liberty and national proſperity, than in almoſt any other European kingdom. Foreſeeing their tendency to encreaſe their own power at the expence of the community, our anceſtors, who never dreamed of laying them aſide entirely (except during the period of the commonwealth,) divided them into three diſtinct corporations; that each having a ſeparate *eſprit de corps*, might be a check to each others encroachment; and that the people might always have the chance of being applied to in the laſt reſort. Unfortunately the Houſe of Commons has been conſidered as ſynonimous with the people; in direct oppoſition to matter of fact and common ſenſe. The houſe of commons it is well known are not the repreſentatives of the people, is it not *there* that the voice of the people is heard; that houſe is more a repreſentation of the lords than the commons of Great Britain; and the ſalutary check to the privileged orders, intended by the ſpirit of the conſtitution to be placed in the democracy of the country, is in conſequence, almoſt annihilated. If it were neceſſary to bring proofs of this notorious truth, they are abundant in Wills's Notitia Parliamentaria, in Burgh's Political Diſquiſitions, and ſtill more compleatly in Oldfield's Hiſtory of the Boroughs of Great Britain lately publiſhed; which no man of common ſenſe and common honeſty can peruſe, without execrating the folly or the knavery of thoſe who unblushingly vindicate the preſent ſyſtem of fraud, corruption and intrigue. To reſtore this imperfect ſtate of parliamentary repreſentation to its conſtitutional vigour —to create what has never yet been ſeen in this country, a full, fair, and adequate repreſentation of the people in the *lower houſe* of parliament (as the inſolence of privilege has contemptuouſly termed it)—to enſure upon all occaſions that the voice of the people and the voice of the houſe of commons ſhall be the ſame, and that the repreſentatives of the people ſhall be under the due controul of thoſe who

ſend

ſend them, by means of annual or triennial elections—is the ſole end and aim of the friends of Britiſh liberty, almoſt without exception. Were this reform to take place effectually by means of peaceable but manly applications to parliament, and aſſociations among the people directed to this purpoſe, I am ſatisfied, that although our conſtitution would be far from perfect, it would ſtill enſure to the people all the eſſential advantages of government; and that the objections to it on account of the exiſtence of privileged orders, would not juſtify any friend to his country in attempting a revolution under ſuch circumſtances.

By an EFFECTUAL reform however, I do not mean the paltry manœuvre of disfranchiſing the boroughs and adding to the country members; nor the equally objectionable meaſure, of admitting only taxable houſeholders to vote, although formerly I had doubts upon this ſubject. But it cannot be denied that by this means, the larger part of the community, the moſt important part of the community, the moſt oppreſſed, the moſt induſtrious part of the community, thoſe, who having the moſt reaſon to complain, complain the leaſt; the cottager, the mechanic, and the day-labourer, (or as that inveterate enemy of human kind Mr. Burke would call them, *the ſwiniſh multitude*) are placed in perpetual ſubjection to a corporation—an ariſtocracy of property, more or leſs extended. I do not mean this. It is impoſſible to defend the ſyſtem of disfranchiſing a fellow citizen, becauſe he is not ſo rich as his more favoured neighbour. Under any ſtate of ſociety property always has had, and will have, full as much influence as it ought; and it is groſs ignorance in politics to add ſo many artificial to the natural inequalities among men. Neither am I prepared to believe that public ſpirit and independence is excluſively confined to the rich: ſo far as my experience goes, the direct contrary is the fact; and I almoſt ſuſpect that "it is "as eaſy for a cable to go through the eye of a needle" as for a man of large property to be a thorough patriot. I am not prepared to believe that public ſpirit is not among the poor man's virtues; I know and confeſs the temptations he is ſometimes under to ſacrifice his political opinions for his daily bread: but ſo far as I have been able to judge, it is not from want of principle that the poor give way, but from want of knowlege: kept, as they are, in the moſt deplorable

able ignorance of their political rights—encouraged to work hard and to drink hard, but to think little and to read nothing—no wonder they ſhould barter their birth right for a meſs of pottage, when they know too well the value of the one, and know nothing about the other. Suppoſing, however, that the want of independence may be a crime attached to poverty; is it not evident that the way to create it if it does not exiſt, and to confirm it if it does, is to take for granted its exiſtence? Alas! among other robberies committed upon the poor, they are robbed of their good fame, and their honeſt character, by proud and privileged law-givers: "depart (it is in fact ſaid by the ſmall part of "a nation to the larger), depart ye wretches, ye ſwiniſh "multitude, ye riff raff, ye ſcum of the earth: ye are "guilty of that epitome of all the crimes of the Decalogue, "ye are convicted of POVERTY! What rights can ye pre-"tend to, who have not a penny in your pockets? Away to "your diſmal habitations, and your ſcanty fare; go work "and be contented." How oppoſite are the ſentiments of ſcripture and modern politicians! The bible (in the text above quoted) declares that riches are an obſtacle in the way to the kingdom of heaven: while among European legiſlators, poverty and virtue are deemed incompatible! Degrade a man in his own opinion, ſtigmatize him by legal ſuſpicion, take for granted that he has no character to loſe, and you go the ſure way to work to make him in reality what you believe him to be. We have done ſo by the Jews. On the contrary, let him know that you place confidence in his integrity, that he has a character to loſe by improper behaviour, and that you expect, as a matter of courſe, that he will act as he ought—the chances are, that he will feel his own dignity, and juſtify the expectations you entertain of his good conduct. Laws make manners. It is a crime, aye, and a foul crime againſt human nature, ſyſtematically to debaſe in the eye of the public, and in their own opinion, ſo large a portion of mankind as THE POOR unhappily form.

Moreover, thoſe who have little, deſerve to have that little the more carefully protected: the leſs a man poſſeſſes, the leſs he can ſpare from his narrow ſtore; and at any rate even the pooreſt are poſſeſſors of the moſt invaluable ſpecies of property, life, and liberty, and labour. To infringe upon theſe directly or indirectly, without the conſent of the

owner, is neither more nor leſs than tyranny in the law that enacts it, and ſlavery in the object who is compelled to ſubmit to it.

Neither can it be truly ſaid, that the poor man pays no taxes; for he expends the produce of his labour in the moſt productive article of modern taxation, the neceſſaries of life. The fire with which he warms his frozen limbs, and dreſſes his ſcanty morſel—the candle that enables his family to toil at the ſpinning wheel, or the loom, during thoſe hours, which the middling claſſes devote to relaxation from buſineſs, and the great to the zenith of their pleaſurable career—the ſmall beer that waſhes down his homely repaſt—every morſel of his food, every article of his apparel, and even the ſcanty furniture of his cottage, are all affected by the extravagance and miſmanagement of thoſe who govern. The more taxes are required, the more hours he muſt labour to ſupply his wants, and the more diſtant his proſpect of obtaining the comforts and conveniences of exiſtence.

How little the intereſts of the poor are taken care of, and how neceſſary it is that the voice of the poor man ſhould be heard with attention and reſpect in the houſe of commons, the numerous incloſure bills are pregnant inſtances, where, as in the fable of Nathan the prophet, the poor man's lamb is ſeized, to increaſe the numerous herds of his richer and more powerful neighbours. Whereas, inſtead of dividing the commons and waſtes among the rich, natural juſtice and good policy would teach us, to diſtribute them among the poor.* But we take good care to fulfil with the moſt ſcrupulous orthodoxy, that text of ſcripture "Unto every "one that hath, ſhall be given, and he ſhall have abundance, "but from him that hath not ſhall be taken away, even that "which he hath."

A ſtill more flagrant inſtance of cruelty and injuſtice toward the poor, is the practice of *impreſſing*. The labour of the poor man, conſtitutes the whole of his wealth, and his domeſtic connections almoſt the whole of his happineſs. But on a ſudden, under the dubious authority of a preſs warrant, he is cut off from his peaceful habitation and domeſtic ſociety, and forcibly dragged on board the floating

* There is a very important book too little noticed, an Eſſay on the Right to Property in Land, by Dr. Ogilvie. 8vo.

priſon

priſon of a tender: he is compelled to labour in the dreadful ſervice of murdering his fellow-creatures at the command of his ſuperiors, and paid ſuch ſcanty wages, not as he can earn or deſerves, but as the niggardly ſyſtem of government finance thinks fit to allow. His family meanwhile, who look up to him for comfort and ſubſiſtence, ignorant of his misfortune, are anxiouſly expecting his wonted return; perhaps their homely repaſt for the night depended on his earnings for the day; but his uſual hour of return to his family is gone by; each paſſing footſtep, each noiſe of diſtant ſimilarity, is eagerly liſtened to in vain; hope ſtill draws out the lengthened evening, till a ſleepleſs night of lamentation and deſpair ſucceeds the dreary melancholy hours of ſucceſſive diſappointment and fruitleſs expectation. The next or ſucceeding day brings the mournful tidings of his deſtiny; and leaves the widowed wife (perhaps the pregnant mother) to eke out a comfortleſs exiſtence under the accumulated preſſure of want, and labour, and ſorrow, and diſeaſe.

Innumerable are the caſes of this nature, that muſt of neceſſity attend the practice of impreſſing for ſoldiers and mariners. But the miſeries of the lower claſſes of ſociety are borne in torpid ſilence, and patient reſignation. The feeble voice of ſuffering poverty can ſeldom extend beyond the humble limits of her own habitation; ſtill leſs can it penetrate the joyous manſions of the great, or intrude on the pompous occupations of the ſtateſman:—otherwiſe it might truly ſuggeſt, that even if WARS *be* neceſſary, this tyrannical ſyſtem of violence and robbery is not ſo. It is the offſpring of ſtate-parſimony alone. Why not add a fourth or a half to the common wages, to induce volunteers? Why not double the pay?—Why not?—Becauſe the overgrown fortunes of the rich landholders, the monopolizers of waſtes and commons, would experience an almoſt imperceptible diminution. While, by the good old faſhion of dragging away the poor by means of a preſs-gang, no taxes are laid upon the wealthy; and a due portion of the ſwiniſh multitude, the ſcum of the earth, are periodically ſwept away as food for powder.

Such are ſome among the numerous hardſhips of which the Britiſh poor have too much reaſon to complain. Indigence, one would think, is of itſelf a ſufficient evil to an inhabitant of ſociety, without being held out as a reproach,

or converted into a crime. Why then ſhould ſlavery be added to poverty, and the rights of man, be emerged in the misfortunes of the citizen? A citizen indeed is an improper appellation; the poor man is not a citizen: for being denied, *even by the ſpirit of the conſtitution*, the privilege of repreſentation, he is ſubjected to the will of thoſe who make, and the power of thoſe who execute, the laws; and he is at beſt but an inhabitant of his native land, for the benefit of his richer neighbour.

Hence I cannot help regarding any ſcheme of reform as inſignificant to ſay no worſe of it, which ſhall not include in the ſcheme itſelf (without truſting to diſtant promiſes and fair profeſſions) ſome effectual means of raiſing and meliorating the condition of what are called the lower claſſes of the people. Patriots (as Dr. Johnſon very ſhrewdly and ſarcaſtically remarked) are fond of levelling down to themſelves, but they ſeldom propoſe to level up to themſelves. It is fit that this reproach ſhould be done away from the advocates of a good cauſe. It is the people, the lower claſſes of ſociety, that conſtitute the bulk * of mankind, that form the great maſs of capability, and preſent to the politician the moſt important object of national improvement. For my own part, I care little in compariſon for a reform that ſhall ſerve merely to diminiſh the taxes paid by the rich, or gratify the wiſhes of ſenatorial orators, or would be ſtateſmen, whether in or out of parliament. Away with ſuch half-meaſured reformers—men of rank and reſpectability, as they ſometimes call themſelves; who deſire no farther reform than to extend the ariſtocratic monopoly of power to that circle in which themſelves are included; who make the people the ſtalking-horſe to their deſigns, and the ſtep-ladder to the official ſituations which they aſpire to obtain; who have temperance and moderation in their mouths, and pride and ambition in their hearts; and who raiſe the hue and cry of violence, innovation, and republicaniſm, againſt every man who looks beyond the petty intereſts of a party, or includes in his notions of patriotiſm a deſire to promote not the privileges of a corporation, but the rights of man.

* Chalmers (Eſtimate of the Comparative State of Great Britain, page 195) computes that in 1781 the chargeable houſes were 721,000, and the cottages or dwellings of the poor 865,000.

Hence

Hence alſo, it is to me no matter of ſurprize, that the people, the multitude, feel no intereſt in the repeated outcries for parliamentary reform, when the evils they feel are hardly touched upon, and advantages held out which they have no ambition to enjoy. Who has yet talked * of dividing the waſtes and the commons—of aboliſhing tythes—of rewarding population—of comfortably providing for the old age of the labourer, the manufacturer, the artificer—of exonerating the poor from the indirect taxes which they pay without knowing it, as well as from the direct impoſitions which miniſters ſecretly lay on—and above all, of providing ample means of PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, that the poor man may know what his rights are, and what is the object of government, and what are the duties of the ſervants of the people. That he may become if he chuſes a human creature, and not a machine; and having the capacity of mental improvement given to him by his maker, that he may uſe as he ought, the talent thus committed to his care. Why ſhould the truth be concealed? there is among us too much inequality of rank—too much inequality of riches †—too much inequality of labour. The poor work too much, and know too little: inceſſant labour ſtupifies the mental faculties, and produces an inclination to ſatisfy the cravings of nature beyond the neceſſities of nature. Hence the amuſements of the poor are groſs; their hours of relaxation intemperate, and habits of drunkenneſs and expence are inſenſibly formed,

* That conſpicuous friend of mankind and admirable writer, Mr. Paine, muſt be excepted from this queſtion, as well as the author of the Review of the Conſtitution of Great Britain, Mr. Oſwald, who promiſes a freſh edition of that well written and animated pamphlet.

† I do not mean what the tools of government would willingly faſten upon the friends of the people, *an equal diviſion of property*. Superior talents, ſuperior knowledge, and ſuperior induſtry, ought, on the plaineſt principles of juſtice and equity, to enjoy ſuperior advantages. Who would work that a ſtranger might enjoy the profit of his labour? Who would exert himſelf, if the accumulations of induſtry and frugality ſhould be ſeized by the idle and the ſpendthrift? This would be a ſure way to ſtop the progreſs of improvement in every department of arts, manufactures, agriculture and commerce, and annihilate ſociety itſelf. I mean that ſome direct or indirect method, (either by the ſcheme of an agrarian law, as propoſed by Dr. Ogilvie, or by progreſſive taxation, as propoſed by Mr. Paine) ſhould be adopted to *prevent* enormous accumulations of property in one hand, or in one family. Whereas at preſent we have laws expreſsly to *promote* this.

till the whole man is degraded, and ignorance and poverty linked with him as companions for life. I wiſh it were not true that theſe habits are rather encouraged than ſuppreſſed, that nine-tenths of the nation may be mere machines to execute the labour, of which the other tenth enjoys the profit.

My notions then of an effectual reform in the repreſentation of the people would take in the whole of that ariſtocratical apoſtate, the duke of Richmond's idea in his letter to colonel Sharman. I would have the man, whoſe ſtake in the community conſiſts of life, and liberty, and labour, with a penny in his pocket, to have an equal voice in the choice of legiſlators, by whoſe laws that ſtake is to be protected, with another man who has life, and liberty, and labour, with a hundred thouſand pounds in his pocket. In compariſon with the three firſt articles of the catalogue, which are common to all men, (and which are the means to the acquiſition of the reſt,) the laſt is of trifling moment; it is the ſmall duſt of the balance; an accident of exiſtence; of artificial and not of natural importance; which when weighed againſt the ſolid gifts of nature to her common offſpring, will kick the beam.

Nor, in my opinion, ſhould the people omit to make it a fundamental article of inſtruction, of ſolemn charge, to their repreſentatives, that maturely, but as ſpeedily as may be, they ſhould draw up and ſubmit to the public, for general diſcuſſion during a limited interval, a liberal code of NATIONAL EDUCATION. The god of nature has given to man, not merely hands to labour, but a head to think: he has given him the capability of obtaining knowledge, of mental improvement, and of ſocial intercourſe. One great uſe of ſociety is to bring theſe capabilities into action, that not only each individual, but each community of individuals, and finally the human race, by means of mutual communication may proceed in the glorious career of mutual and progreſſive improvement. As it is, the major part of the ſpecies, from the total want of education, are deprived of the means of obtaining knowledge of any kind, except that which is abſolutely neceſſary to their immediate ſubſiſtence. And for the moſt part, they are *inſidiouſly* kept in a ſtate of brutal ignorance, and mental depreſſion, that they may be led to regard their rulers as beings of a ſuperior claſs. Stateſmen and prieſts well know that knowledge is the mortal enemy of ſtate-craft and prieſt-craft; and therefore

therefore in all kingdoms, and in all ages, they have uniformly ſet their faces againſt diſcuſſion and enquiry. I beg my readers (of the lower claſs particularly, if this tract ſhould happen to fall into their hands) to mark, that *this* is the cloven foot of deſpotiſm, by which it may always be known whatever ſhape it may aſſume. "Leave the care of "your ſouls to me," ſays the prieſt; "of your liberties "and properties to me," ſays the ſtateſman; "pay your "tithes and your taxes, and put your truſt in us. But "carefully avoid all writings, and meetings, and converſa-"tions about articles of belief, or the rights of man: theſe "are heretical and ſeditious. The means of knowledge are "the wicked contrivances of atheiſts and republicans— "Wretches who deſpiſe the holy doctrine of infallibility in "church and ſtate."

Under theſe circumſtances of national ignorance, ſo prevalent among the lower claſſes of ſociety, I know of no ſcheme ſo likely to form the ſolid baſis of future reformation, nor any inſtitution more neceſſary as an act of national juſtice, than a well formed plan of public *education*. The whole of our conduct toward the poor, ſeems to me a ſyſtem of flagrant iniquity. We put it out of their power to acquire knowledge, becauſe their ſcanty earnings will hardly afford the means of ſubſiſtence to a family; much leſs will they allow the expence of education.* Having thus contributed to degrade by neglecting our duty toward them, having made them poor and kept them ignorant, we declare them unfit to be truſted, and thruſt them out from

* Charity ſchools and ſunday ſchools are. 1ſt. Partial remedies; and therefore unjuſt. 2dly. The great objects of education, at thoſe places, ſo far as I have obſerved, are pſalm-ſinging, and ſervile civility to every paſſenger with a tolerable coat upon his back. 3dly. The children are ſeduloufly educated in habits of bigotted reverence for the miniſters of religion, and the unintelligible jargon of orthodoxy. I do not make this obſervation, from any private deſire to introduce the tenets of any other religious ſect. I diſclaim all connection with religious ſects of every denomination, obſerving, and knowing that each has ſome petty intereſt of its own, paramount to every other conſideration; and that each forms a corporate body, actuated by a party ſpirit, ſeldom, if ever, in uniſon with the intereſts of the nation. I want to ſee one great corporation, and one only permanent corporation—that of the community; then ſhall I ſee one great and permanent one predominant intereſt —that of the community. This period, I fear, altho' its advent be certain, I ſhall not ſee; but thoſe days *will* come, *venient annis ſæcula ſeris*. And altho' I ſhall not hail the preſence of that æra among us, my leiſure ſhall be unremittingly employed, and my beſt endeavours exerted to haſten its approach.

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any participation of the moſt eſſential rights of man and a citizen. Not content with this, our ſanguinary code of criminal law, equally a diſgrace to common ſenſe and common humanity, is converted into an inſtrument of legal murder againſt the poor. It is related, I think, of one of the tyrants of Syracuſe, that his laws were purpoſely engraved in ſo ſmall a character, and hung up ſo high, that the people were unable to read their contents; and his cruelty was glutted by puniſhing the miſerable offenders againſt edicts impoſſible to be known; for his maxim was the ſame with ours, *Ignorantia legis neminem excuſat.** Thus do we, when we condemn to death a poor wretch whoſe ſituation has never enabled him to learn the common rudiments of language, and whoſe poverty perhaps, and contempt of life, have induced him to commit the crime againſt ſociety, for which our laws ſo ſeverely puniſh him. A well-digeſted ſyſtem of NATIONAL EDUCATION, by affording to the poor the elements of knowledge, would enable them to know their duties, and be a means of inculcating more effectually the propriety of attending to them; it would give them other amuſements after the labours of the day, than habitual intemperance; it would draw forth latent ability, would give energy to induſtry, and would raiſe the whole man in the ſcale of being. Great indeed would be the advantages of a more general diffuſion of knowledge to the *nation:* to *deſpotiſm*, the period of its inſtitution would be a day of ſolemn dirge.

Until ſuch a ſyſtem of public education can be compleatly eſtabliſhed, the middling and poor claſſes of ſociety cannot do better than to eſtabliſh meetings and clubs,† not for riot or revelling, nor yet for treaſon or ſedition, but for reading and converſation; that they may gradually become informed what are the rights and what are the duties of a citizen; what privileges they are deprived of, to which they are fairly entitled; and in what reſpects their ſeveral ſituations require to be ameliorated by a more wiſe and equitable ſyſtem of legiſlation. Theſe ſocieties would do well to communicate and correſpond with each other throughout

* When my lords the judges differ from each other on the conſtruction of a penal ſtatute, or the application of a reported caſe (nothing uncommon) what becomes of this fundamental maxim of the law?

† Some very good hints for aſſociations of this kind are to be found in the MANCHESTER HERALD of June 16th, 1792.

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the kingdom. And when by the peruſal of ſuch publications as treat on the great queſtions of politics, the people have learnt that they are not a *ſwiniſh multitude*, but human beings; having equal rights and equal capacities for improvement in their reſpective deſtinations, with thoſe men who govern and *deſpiſe* them; let them unite in a firm and decided, but reaſonable and reſpectful appeal to the legiſlature, in behalf of thoſe claims which the people have a right to urge: not propoſing a time-ſerving, compromiſing, half-meaſured plan of reformation; not relinquiſhing for the ſake of themſelves, what they ought to dwell upon for the ſake of poſterity, but requiring the adoption of ſuch meaſures as ſhall effectually ſecure to the great maſs of the nation in their fulleſt extent a ſpeedy reſtoration of their long loſt rights *.

Such are the political ſentiments of "one of the worſt men in the kingdom," according to Mr. Burke; and very ſorry indeed ſhould I be, conſidering Mr. Burke's notions of political virtue, had I merited *his* encomium.

I ſhall not talk of the penſion which this diſintereſted politician has been ſo frequently accuſed of receiving in another man's name, from the Iriſh eſtabliſhment; for I doubt whether his ſilence upon the occaſion amounts to a demonſtration of the charge. I ſhall not dwell upon his doating attachment to the queen of the French, whoſe character has been tainted by imputations of the blackeſt kind; for *his* ideas of virtue ſeem widely different from thoſe of the multitude, they are not formed upon the common ſtandard, nor do they harmonize with the common ſentiments of mankind: perhaps as goiters ſeem beauties to the inhabi-

* There are one or two other particulars that might attend a ſcheme of parliamentary reform, which, though not of abſolute neceſſity, appear to me of great importance. 1. Excluſion by rotation. If parliaments were annual, no man ſhould be eligible to more than three parliaments in ſucceſſion; he ſhould be laid by, during the 4th at leaſt: if biennial, the members might be allowed to ſit in two parliaments, and laid aſide during the third: and the people ſhould *at any time* have a right of turning them out, that the repreſentatives *might not perſuade themſelves that they had a right to be elected*. 2. The good old cuſtom of paying *Wages* to the members ſhould be reſtored: it is part of the Britiſh conſtitution, and is adopted in France. If the people do not pay their repreſentatives, the court will. A nation ought not to be under an obligation to an individual for ſervices which can be rewarded. It is clearly the intereſt of the nation to make it the intereſt of their repreſentatives to do their duty. Hence they ought to be paid, not by the year, but in proportion to their attendance in parliament. If the people pay them, they will be the ſervants of the people; if the court pays them, they will be the ſervants of the court.

tants of the Alps, ſo moral deformities, may be objects of reverential admiration in the judgment of Mr. Burke. I will not accuſe him of indelicate cruelty toward our own queen, or of want of loyalty toward the king, at the melancholy period when the Britiſh ſovereign was afflicted with temporary inſanity: although Mr. Burke, regardleſs of a wife and mother on that occaſion, might declare that the Almighty had HURLED the monarch from his throne, I ſhall lay no charge againſt him on this account, for he may ſince have atoned for paſt miſdemeanors, and have made his peace at court, where his ſins againſt majeſty are forgiven, and his political offences remembered no more. I ſhall not recall his ungentleman-like, outrageous abuſe of his right honourable enemies, now his right honourable friends, lord North, Mr. Pitt, and Mr. Dundas: let him pleaſe himſelf in his friendſhips and his enmities: he acted in theſe inſtances not haſtily and capriciouſly, but with due premeditation; and with much pains and aſſiduity having dreſſed them up to his taſte in all the crimes of a *Nero*, then, and not till then, he adopts them for his aſſociates, and takes them to his boſom.* Neither ſhall I have much to ſay concerning "the hoofs of the ſwiniſh multitude;"† nor ſhall I dwell on the exquiſite ſpecimen of diſtributive juſtice wherewith he has favoured the world; conceding to biſhops, ſuch as thoſe of Durham and Wincheſter, the paltry reward in preſent poſſeſſion, of no more than ten thouſand a year‖, while to the poor he recommends, to "reſpect that property of *which they cannot partake.* They "muſt labour to obtain what by labour can be obtained; "and when they find, *as they commonly do*, the ſucceſs diſ-"proportioned to the endeavour, they muſt be taught their "conſolation in the FINAL PROPORTIONS OF ETERNAL "JUSTICE!"§—On none of thoſe topics ſhall I detain my

* "Did you never tell lord North," ſays a member of the Revolution Society (I believe major Scott) to Mr. Burke, "that he would carry on the "war as long as he could find money to bribe gentlemen to ſay they believed "him? Did you not once tell Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas that they had pro-"poſed, and the majority had adopted a ſcheme that would have diſgraced "the infamous reign of a Nero? I will not trouble you with further quota-"tions now, though I have a hundred ready: and theſe aſſertions were not "confined to the walls of your houſe, but were circulated by yourſelf in "pamphlets." Letters to the Rt. Hon. Mr. Burke. p. 18.

† Reflections, p. 117. ‖ Ibid, p. 154. § Ibid, p. 351.

reader:

reader: contenting myſelf with a delineation of Mr. Burke's *humanity* and *patriotiſm*, in his own words.

In ſpeaking of the perſons put to death by the multitude, during the early part of the French revolution, he ſays, *If by effectual puniſhment of the guilty, they do not diſavow that practice, and the threat of it too as a part of their policy*; (a guilt, by the way, of which the nation was never guilty, and a threat which they never made), *if ever a foreign prince enters into France, he muſt enter it as a country of aſſaſſins. The mode of civilized war will not be practiſed, nor are the French, who act on the preſent ſyſtem, entitled to it. They whoſe known policy it is to aſſaſſinate every citizen whom they ſuſpect to be diſcontented by their own tyranny, and to corrupt the ſoldiery of every open enemy, muſt look for no modified hoſtility. All war which is not battle, will be military execution. This will beget acts of retaliation from you, and every retaliation will beget a new revenge. The hell hounds of war on all ſides, will be uncoupled and unmuzzled.* Such is Mr. Burke's advice; proceeding, no doubt, from the very milk of human kindneſs! Pity that his *facts* are no where to be found but in the fine phrenzy of his own poetic imagination!

With the preceding paſſage I ſhall contraſt the following ſentiments of Dr. Parr, who with becoming indignation, inveighs againſt "the counſels of thoſe ſanguinary fanatics, "who would unbluſhingly, and unfeelingly, rouſe the un-"ſparing ſword of foreign potentates, and point it without "provocation, without precedent, without any other plea "than will, againſt the boſoms of Frenchmen, contending "with Frenchmen alone, upon French ground alone, about "French rights, French laws, and French government "alone.

"When it is urged, that princes, from their relation to "princes, have a common cauſe, (and a cauſe too, it is "*meant* virtually paramount to the rights of ſubjects and of "men) the obvious anſwer is, that they who are *not* princes "have alſo a common cauſe, and the obvious conſequence "of the anſwer is, that if they are true to themſelves, to "their neighbours, and to poſterity, confederacy is to riſe "up againſt confederacy, and deluge the world with blood."

"If indeed the threatened cruſade of ruffian deſpots "ſhould be attempted, it will, in my opinion, be an out-"rageous infringement upon the law of nations; it will be "a ſavage conſpiracy againſt the written and unwritten rights

" of mankind; and *therefore*, in the ſincerity of my ſoul, I " pray the righteous governor of the univerſe, the creator " of men, and the king of kings, I pray him to abate the " pride, to aſſuage the malice, and to confound all the de- " vices of all the parties, directly or indirectly leagued in " this complicated ſcene of guilt and horror! this inſult upon " the dignity of human nature itſelf! this treaſon againſt the " majeſty of God's own image, rational and immortal " man."*

In the " Appeal from the old to the new whigs" [p. 33.] Mr. Burke, ſpeaking of himſelf, ‡ ſays, *He was the firſt man who on the huſtings at a popular election rejected the authority of inſtructions from conſtituents, or who in any place has argued ſo fully againſt it. Perhaps the diſcredit into which that doctrine of compulſive inſtructions under our conſtitution is ſince fallen, may be due, in a great degree, to his oppoſing himſelf to it in that manner and on that occaſion.*

The reforms in the repreſentation, and the bills for ſhortening the duration of parliaments, he uniformly and ſteadily oppoſed for many years together, in contradiction to many of his beſt friends.———

Againſt the opinion of many friends, even againſt the ſolicitation of ſome of them, he oppoſed thoſe of the church clergy, who had petitioned the houſe of commons to be diſcharged from ſubſcription.———

Theſe inſtances, a few among many, are produced as an anſwer to the inſinuation of his having purſued highly popular courſes, which in his late book (the Reflections) *he has abandoned.*

Such is Mr. Burke's deſcription of his own character. Boldly rejecting the ſhallow maſk of hypocriſy, he ſtands forward to the world the public profeſſor of political turpitude, the ſyſtematic opponent of every ſpecies of reform, and in love with the very ſinfulneſs of ſin. Other offenders againſt the rights of man, and the improvement of ſociety, have at leaſt had the modeſty to plead the common temptations, and palliate their offences by the common excuſes; they have been led aſtray by the prevalence of example, by the love of riches, or the thirſt of power; all have had their motives, extraneous to their crimes. But excuſes ſuit not

* Sequel to the printed paper, p. 73.

‡ Although this pamphlet is anonymous, yet as it is univerſally underſtood and quoted as Mr. Burke's, and bears with it intrinſic evidence of the author, I aſcribe it to him without heſitation.

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the high-minded iniquity of Mr. Burke's politics, and he unblushingly obtrudes himself on the disgusted eye of the public, in all the nakedness and deformity of political vice.

> Fall'n cherub, to be weak is mis'rable
> Doing or suff'ring: but of this be sure,
> To do ought good, never will be our task,
> But ever to do ill our sole delight,
> As being contrary to that high will
> Which we resist. *MILTON.*

Such is our accuser; the professed opponent of the rights of man! May we never deserve his panegyric.

FINIS.

APPENDIX.

Manchester, 8th May, 1792.

THE MANCHESTER CONSTITUTIONAL SOCIETY, finding that two of their members were in PARIS upon private buſineſs, thought it right to deſire them to communicate with the patriotic ſocieties of France, for the purpoſe of "eſtabliſhing a correſpondence, upon any occaſion in "which the *rights*, *intereſts*, and *happineſs* of mankind were concerned." Such a correſpondence has been propoſed on the part of the Mancheſter ſociety, and has been acceded to by the "ſociety of friends of the conſtitution" in Paris, commonly known by the appellation of the club of the Jacobins.

The MANCHESTER CONSTITUTIONAL SOCIETY has no *ſecret* correſpondence, nor any wiſh to conceal their ſentiments, their deſigns, or their conduct; and to prevent any caſual or wilful miſrepreſentation of their communication with the French ſocieties in general, or with the Jacobins in particular, they publiſh the following tranſlations of the addreſs of their members to the Jacobin ſociety, of the anſwer of their Preſident, and of the letter from that ſociety to the conſtitutional ſociety of Mancheſter.

THOMAS WALKER, Preſident.
SAMUEL JACKSON, Secretary.

TRANSLATION *of the* ADDRESS *preſented by the* Deputies *of the* Conſtitutional Society of Mancheſter, *to the* Society of Friends of the Conſtitution, *ſitting at the* Jacobins in Paris, *on the 13th of April*, 1792.

BRETHREN AND FRIENDS,

We feel a ſincere ſatisfaction in communicating to you the reſolution by which our brethren of the conſtitutional

ſociety of Mancheſter have appointed us their deputies to the patriotic ſocieties of France.

Now that a concert is forming among the deſpotic powers of Europe, to overwhelm the cauſe of liberty, and annihilate the rights of man, it will no doubt give you pleaſure to be informed, that there exiſt every where (even among thoſe nations which the intrigues of kings and courtiers have too frequently compelled to be at enmity) men who feel ſtrongly intereſted in your cauſe—the cauſe not merely of the French, but of all mankind.

The light which you have thrown upon the true principles of politics, and the natural rights of man, (a light which in England faintly gleams amidſt the darkneſs of civil ignorance) ought to teach us that the period is at length arrived to aboliſh all national prejudice, and for the freemen of every country to ſalute each other as brethren.—Too long have the machinations of deſpots, always in oppoſition to the dictates of nature, taught the nations of the earth to regard each other as enemies.

Conſidering the club of the Jacobins not merely as the friends of the conſtitution of France, but alſo under the ſtill more reſpectable title of the friends of the human race, we requeſt, in the name of the conſtitutional ſociety of Mancheſter, an amicable communication and correſpondence with them, as the continuation at leaſt, if not as the commencement of a general federation amongſt the patriotic ſocieties of Europe, having for its object the fraternal union of all men. Our ſociety will be happy to join its efforts to yours, in propagating thoſe important principles of liberty, which alone can fix on a firm and immoveable baſis the empire of peace, and the happineſs of mankind.

We congratulate the club of the Jacobins on the involuntary homage which one of the deſpotic courts of Europe has already paid them, in pointing them out as the moſt determined enemies of arbitrary power. Proceed, Brethren, in the courſe of your philanthropic exertions; and continue to merit the execration of tyrants, and the benedictions of the human race!

(Signed) THOMAS COOPER.
JAMES WATT, jun.

ANSWER

ANSWER *of* M. CARRA, Vice-Preſident, *in the abſence of the* Preſident.

It is juſt 100 years ſince the Engliſh afforded a ſublime example to the univerſe, in levelling the deſpotic pride of kings, and in exhibiting the firſt glimpſe of a declaration of the rights of man, in their conſtitutional charter. At that time, the other nations of the globe were ſurrounded with the thick clouds of ignorance, and bent under the yoke of the moſt ſhameful ſervitude. At preſent the French have imitated your example, and imitated it with a degree of perfection which doubtleſs heretofore you were not permitted to attain, and which is no more than the natural and ſucceſſive progreſs of human reaſon. At preſent, alſo, it is the Engliſh who commence the general alliance of all nations, and which, we may reſt aſſured, will make of one family the human race. Yes, brethren and friends, the Engliſh and the French, re-united for ever by the ties of juſtice, humanity, and the moſt brotherly affection, will combat in union for the maintenance of their common liberty, and the perfecting of their reſpective governments. In vain the ebullition of deſpotic rage among the tyrants of Europe flatters itſelf, as formerly, to ſet one people at enmity with another; to augment the number of their ſlaves, or to gratify their revenge: the hour of theſe errors and illuſions has paſſed; national animoſities, fomented by the intrigue and impoſture of courts, are beginning to be extinguiſhed. The French people, the French ſoldiers, and the French ſailors, ſee none but brethren and friends among the ſame claſſes of the Engliſh, and earneſtly deſire to take them in their arms, and contract with them, on the holy goſpel of the rights of man, an eternal compact of concord and of peace. Already the Engliſh flag, united and entwined with the three-coloured flag of France, and the thirteen ſtripes of the brave Americans, is ſuſpended from the roofs of almoſt every patriotic ſociety of France; already ſeveral civic feaſts have been celebrated in almoſt every department of the empire, conſecrating the alliance which we have ſworn anew to obſerve with all the patriots of England, in the perſons of the deputies from the ſociety of the far-famed town of Manchester. Friends, tell your fellow-citizens, thoſe men whom the genius of induſtry, and of patriotiſm, have rendered ſo dear to all the lovers of the arts, of commerce, and of humanity—tell them that you have ſeen here Frenchmen, (whoſe natural character has long been weighed down by

ſlavery, but now ariſen and developed by energetic ſentiments of the rights of man and of liberty), now breathing a ſpirit of univerſal philanthropy—ſeeing none but brethren among men, and relations among people. Tell them that our courage and perſeverance will ſtand every teſt, and that we have not ſworn in vain to live freemen or to die. Tell them again (though the tyrants of Europe redouble their rage!) that the politics of the true patriots of France, and of the Jacobins, ſo dreaded by the traitors and enemies of liberty, do not conſiſt in deſiring the glory and the proſperity of the countries that gave them birth, but the glory, the proſperity, and the liberty of every nation. Yes, this is the perpetual, unremitting object of the Jacobins, that is to ſay, of an immenſe majority of the nation; and in virtue of this happy diſpoſition, the friends of the conſtitution at Paris, in its own name, and in the name of all the patriotic ſocieties of the French empire, ties itſelf, by an inviolable promiſe, to the conſtitutional ſociety of Mancheſter. The aſſembly invites you to its meetings, while you ſtay at Paris.

The ſociety, in ordering this diſcourſe to be printed, directs the tranſmiſſion of it to all the affiliated ſocieties, as well as to the conſtitutional ſociety of Mancheſter.

(Signed) CARRA, Vice-Preſident.
DUCOS AND SALADIN,
Deputies to the National Aſſembly.
DEPERRY, ROI, DOPPET,
Secretaries.

TRANSLATION *of the* LETTER *from the* Society of Friends of the Conſtitution *at* Paris, *to the* Conſtitutional Society of Mancheſter.

FRIENDS AND BRETHREN,

The affectionate addreſs communicated to us by your deputies, Meſſrs. Cooper and Watt, has rejoiced the heart of every honeſt Frenchman, and of every true friend of humanity and philoſophy. The hour is at length arrived, which ignorance has always looked upon as a chimera; that hour when nations, hitherto at enmity, begin to diſcover, that it is in the order of nature, of reaſon, and of their true intereſts, to live as brethren, and to unite in earneſt againſt the tyrants and oppreſſors of the human race. Happy revolution of 1789! It is to that revolution we are indebted for the inappreciable advantage of ſeeing the two nations haſtening to commence that ſublime alliance which will one

day unite all the inhabitants of the globe. No, it ſhall not be in the power of events to break thoſe ties of relationſhip, and fraternity, which we hereby acknowledge and contract, with the good citizens of England, and particularly with our friends of the conſtitutional ſociety of Mancheſter. This letter of formal affiliation, which we addreſs to you as from the original ſociety of friends of the conſtitution ſitting at Paris, is a ſure pledge of our principles and of our ſentiments. It will be an eternal monument of our mutual philanthropy, an indeſtructible proof of the progreſs of human reaſon, and will quickly furniſh to the other parts of your empire, to Scotland and Ireland, an example worthy of imitation. *We have no doubt that the moment is at hand, when thouſands of patriotic deputies will aſſemble in the names of their reſpective nations, at ſome given place in Europe, to diſcuſs there the great intereſts of general humanity, of peace, and of univerſal liberty.* This novel, and all powerful federation, whoſe ſole view will be the happineſs and proſperity of the great family of the human race, will completely baniſh the paltry cunning and deceit of diplomatic intrigue; and thoſe ſecret negociations of fraud and impoſture, which anſwer no other purpoſe, than to create diviſion among nations, to ſubject them the more eaſily to oppreſſion. But it is over; the ſun of reaſon ſhines with meridian ſplendor all around, and in ſpite of the coalition of tyrants againſt us, the triumph of the friends of juſtice and humanity is certain. Worthy citizens of Mancheſter, you will participate in this triumph.

We are, with the profoundeſt ſentiments of fraternal affection, your brethren and friends,

DEPERREY AND DOPPET, Secretaries.

CARRA, Vice-Preſident.

PARIS, April 14th, 1792.

The 4th year of liberty.

As the following correſpondence is of a ſimilar nature with the preceding, and in ſome degree connected with it, I have thought fit to ſubjoin it. The reader will agree with me that it well deſerves to be peruſed and remembered on account of its intrinſic merit.

SOCIETY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION, *May*, 18, 1792. *At a meeting held this day, the following* ADDRESS *to the* FRIENDS *of the* CONSTITUTION *at Paris, commonly called* JACOBINS, *and which was, by the direction of this Society, ſent to them laſt week, was ordered for Publication:*

" Brothers and Fellow-Citizens of the World,

" The cordial and affectionate reception with which you have honoured our worthy countrymen, Mr. Thomas COOPER and Mr. JAMES WATT, members of the ſociety of Mancheſter, and united with our ſociety, has been communicated to us by the correſpondence of thoſe gentlemen.

" In offering you our congratulations on the glorious revolution which your nation has accompliſhed, we ſpeak a language which only ſincerity can dictate.

" The formality of courts affords no example to us. To do our thoughts juſtice, we give to the heart the liberty it delights in, and hail you as brothers.

" It is not among the leaſt of the revolutions which time is unfolding to an aſtoniſhed world, that two nations, nurſed by ſome wretched CRAFT in reciprocal hatred, ſhould ſo ſuddenly break their common odious chain, and ruſh into amity. The principle that can produce ſuch an effect, is the offſpring of no earthly court; and whilſt it exhibits to us the expenſive iniquity of former politics, it enables us, with bold felicity, to ſay—We have done with them.

" In contemplating the political condition of nations, we cannot conceive a more diabolical ſyſtem of government, than that which has hitherto been generally practiſed over the world. To feed the avarice, and gratify the wickedneſs of ambition, the fraternity of the human race has been deſtroyed; as if the ſeveral nations of the earth had been created by rival Gods. Man has not conſidered man as the work of one creator.

" The political inſtitutions under which he has lived, have been counter to whatever religion he profeſſed. Inſtead of that univerſal benevolence which the morality of every known religion declares, he has been politically bred to conſider his ſpecies as his natural enemy, and to deſcribe virtues and vices by a geographical chart.

" The principles we now declare are not peculiar to the ſociety that addreſſes you. They are extending themſelves, with accumulating force, through every part of our country, and derive ſtrength from an union of cauſes which no other principles admit.

" The

" The religious friend of man, of every denomination, records them as his own; they animate the lover of rational liberty; and they cheriſh the heart of the poor, now bending under an oppreſſion of taxes, by a proſpect of relief.

" We have againſt us only that ſame enemy, which is the enemy of juſtice in all countries, a herd of courtiers fattening on the ſpoil of the public.

" It would have given additional triumph to our congratulations, if the equal rights of man (which are the foundation of your declaration of rights) had been recognized by the governments around you, and tranquilly eſtabliſhed in all: But if deſpotiſm be ſtill reſerved to exhibit, by conſpiracy and combination, a farther example of infamy to future ages; that power that diſpoſes of events, beſt knows the means of making that example finally beneficial to his creatures.

" We have beheld your peaceable principles inſulted by deſpotic ignorance; we have ſeen the right hand of fellowſhip, which you held out to the world, rejected by thoſe who riot on its plunder.

" We now behold you a nation provoked into defence: and we can ſee no mode of defence equal to that of eſtabliſhing the general freedom of Europe.

" In this beſt of cauſes we wiſh you ſucceſs—our hearts go with you—and in ſaying this, we believe, we utter the voice of MILLIONS.

" Signed, by Order of the Society,

" JOHN CARTWRIGHT, Chairman.
" D. ADAMS. Secretary."

PROPOSITIONS *reſpecting the* FOUNDATION *of* CIVIL GOVERNMENT; *by* THOMAS COOPER. *Read at the Literary and Philoſophical Society of* MANCHESTER, *on March* 7, 1787, *and firſt publiſhed in the Tranſactions of that Society, vol.* 3, *p.* 481. *Anno* 1790.

I HAVE often thought that the natural rights of mankind and the equitable principles of civil government, might be ſtated ſomewhat more briefly than I have any where ſeen them. With this view I have drawn up the following paper, containing the ſubſtance of many important diſcuſſions concerning the great outlines of civil liberty. It is of great conſequence in my opinion, that a ſubject in which every member of ſociety is ſo immediately intereſted, ſhould be treated, if poſſible, ſo plainly as to be generally underſtood, and ſo briefly as to be eaſily remembered. I cannot ſay, however, that I have accompliſhed my own ideas in theſe reſpects; but where I have failed, I hope ſome other will ſucceed. At any rate, different modes of ſtating the ſame points cannot but have their uſe, eſpecially on a ſubject ſo important, and of ſuch direct and extenſive application.

PROP. I. The right of exerciſing political power is either derived entirely from the conſent of the people over whom it is exerciſed, or it is not. If not, from whence is it derived?

Ten anſwers may in effect be given to this queſtion: of which the moſt part have already been propoſed and defended reſpectively, by writers expreſsly on this ſubject.

1. *It has been ſaid to be of divine appointment—derived from God.*

But which particular government is of divine appointment*? What particular form of government did he appoint? To what man, or ſet of men, did he concede this

* I have ſometimes ſtated the medium of proof directly, and ſometimes in the form of a queſtion, as it occurred. The latter mode is often ſhorter and more familiar.

political

political authority? What were the terms of the grant? Was it to him or them only to whom it was originally granted, or to their poſterity alſo? Over how many men, or how many nations was this dominion to be exerciſed? What evidence have we of the exiſtence of the grant at all? Do any of the preſent rulers throughout the univerſe derive their right from this ſource, mediately or immediately? May it not be ſaid of every uſurper, as well of the moſt legitimate monarch, "the powers that be, are ordained of God?" All theſe queſtions may be put, and ought to be reſolved, before this anſwer can be admitted; but I have not hitherto met with a ſolution of any of them. And it is to be obſerved, that no claim of this kind can be admitted which is not clear, preciſe, and incontrovertible. Nor does the burden of proof lie upon the people. If a fellow-creature informs me, that I and my poſterity are bound to obey his commands, it is not for *me* to prove that I am not ſo bound, but for *him* to prove that I am.

2. *From patriarchal authority and ſucceſſive delegation from the patriarchs.*

This is the exploded hypotheſis of ſir R. Filmer; but granting for a moment, what can never be eſtabliſhed, the right of the patriarchs to govern during the period of their exiſtence, who can prove a right in them to tranſmit their power to others who come not under the ſame venerable deſcription? or the uninterrupted deſcent, or ſucceſſion, of thoſe who would now arrogate the tranſmiſſion?

3. *From parental authority: the head of a family who firſt ſettled in any country having the right of governing his deſcendants.*

This is ſomewhat ſimilar to the preceding ſcource of political dominion: at any rate, however, it can only extend over the progeny of the *living* parent; a delegation to the eldeſt brother for inſtance, or to any other perſon, not being of this deſcription. But granting for a moment this right of delegation in the head of a family, to how many ſucceſſive generations does it extend? Or how can it apply to the preſent circumſtances of political affairs in any nation whatever? Moreover, as the chief if not the only good reaſon, that can be aſſigned for ſubmiſſion in ſuch a caſe to parental authority, is, the greater experience of age, and the greater incitement from parental affection to act with a ſole view to the good of the family, this authority muſt

ceaſe

ceaſe with the life of the parent, becauſe the reaſons themſelves for the ſubmiſſion will then ceaſe: for without the gift of ſupernatural foreſight no man can tell what new caſes will ariſe in the ſucceeding generation, or what kind of a governor his immediate ſucceſſor will prove: and every generation weakens almoſt to annihilation the mere tie of parental affection. But farther, on what ground can a parent, even during life, claim the abſolute direction of conduct over a ſon of forty years of age for inſtance? Suppoſe the ſon ſhould think the parent wrong and himſelf right, ought he to act according to the dictates of his own conſcience, or according to the commands of a father poſſibly of leſs underſtanding, and of decayed faculties? In fact it is now univerſally agreed, that there are caſes and times when parental authority ceaſes to become abſolute, and changes into advice.

4. *The acquieſcence of a parent under any exiſting government binds the family.*

(a) This does not relate to the *origin and foundation* of civil government, for there could be no ſuch acquieſcence before the government in queſtion exiſted. *(b)* The parent cannot bind the ſon to perpetual ſubmiſſion even to parental authority, and much leſs to the authority of others. *(c)* If this ſource of authority were well founded, then would the acquieſcence of a parent under tyranny and deſpotiſm, bind the ſon to obey likewiſe. *(d)* It is always allowed that no parent can deprive his ſon of his *perſonal* rights; he may limit what belongs to himſelf, the property he means to tranſmit, as he pleaſes; but he has no right to what belongs to the ſon. *(e)* This ſource would preclude all additions to, or diminutions of, the governing power, in any way whatever after the death of the father: for to ſuch, the parental acquieſcence could not apply, and the then government would no longer be binding. *(f)* All the objections to the laſt anſwer (the third) apply in ſubſtance to this. *(g)* This anſwer, like the reſt, is a *gratis dictum*, an unproved aſſertion.

5. *The perſonal acquieſcence of the governed, under the government exiſting.*

If ſuch an acquieſcence be the reſult of force, and inability to reſiſt, it amounts to nothing, and is no real acquieſcence. If it be voluntary, it amounts to an implied aſſent, and then the perſons governed are ſo governed with their own conſent. As applied to the *origin* of government, this

ſource of authority thus expreſſed cannot be admitted; for none then exiſted.

6. *It may be ſaid that men are* BORN *ſubjects of ſome particular ſtate, and that in conſequence of this, they owe perpetual allegiance to the government thereof.*

(*a*) This has been, and ſtill is ſaid, but it has never been proved. (*b*) It applies not to the *origin* of government, and before the particular ſtate in queſtion was conſtituted: and it may here be obſerved once for all, that as none of the nations upon earth has exiſted as a political community from all eternity, every ſuch political community muſt have had an origin, or beginning of ſome kind; and if the political dominion was improperly obtained by the governors originally, the forcible continuance of it by their ſucceſſors, cannot make *their* authority equitable. Long continuance cannot alter the nature of iniquity, and convert it into juſtice. (*c*) This ſource of dominion would ſanctify the groſſeſt tyranny and deſpotiſm. (*d*) It may well be denied that there is any thing in the mere circumſtance of being born in this or that part of the globe, that can equitably ſubject any one to the perpetual government of any other of his fellow creatures: and if it be placed upon the circumſtance of the parents being ſubjects, the preceding objections to *parental acquieſcence*, apply. (*e*) This anſwer converts human beings into a ſpecies of property. (*f*) It is contrary to the maxim, that allegiance and protection are reciprocal; for a man may renounce protection. (*g*) It makes the people born for the government, inſtead of the government being created for the people.

7. *Is it not derived from preſcription, from long continuance?*

No: for it could not have been of long continuance when it was firſt exerciſed: and if it could, preſcription gives no right but in the poſitive inſtitutes of municipal law; even there *ſeries annorum non conſecrat errorem.*

8. *Does not actual power, the poſſeſſion of force give right?*

No: for if ſo, then is any man juſtified in deſpoiling another, provided the firſt be ſtronger. Moreover, if *might* give *right*, then ought every parent of ſixty or ſeventy to be in abſolute ſubjection to his more powerful ſon of thirty.

9. *From conqueſt.*

With reſpect to the original derivation of civil authority this claim is nugatory: conqueſt muſt neceſſarily have been poſterior to communities, or conqueſt itſelf could not have been.

Conqueſt

Conqueſt, however, is in all caſes purſued either *(a)* for the mere purpoſes of ambition and increaſe of territory: or *(b)* in purſuit of a war in ſome other way unjuſtly commenced on the part of the conquerors: or *(c)* to compel reſtitution for a national injury committed; or *(d)* to prevent any farther attempt of the ſame kind where there is good ground to ſuſpect ſuch an intention.

In the caſes *(a)* and *(b)* conqueſt can never ſupport the claim in queſtion; for an act of injuſtice can never be the foundation of an equitable right.

In the caſe *(c)* if the vanquiſhed nation make reſtitution, no farther claim lies againſt them, and it ſeldom if ever happens that reſtitution cannot be made. If not, then it may be granted, that the conquering nation may diſpoſe of, or detain ſuch part of the territorial poſſeſſions of the vanquiſhed as are ſufficient to ſatisfy the damage ſuſtained. But when *perſonal* reſiſtance has ceaſed, no claim can exiſt againſt the *perſons* of the vanquiſhed, and *à fortiori* none againſt their children and deſcendants. This caſe, therefore, furniſhes no ground for the right to political authority, and permanent dominion. With reſpect to the territory detained, the original inhabitants who chooſe to remain, or others who accept or purchaſe portions thereof, do ſo upon certain terms; ſo that the power over them muſt be derived from compact, *i. e.* their own conſent. Theſe obſervations will apply alſo to the caſe *(d)*.

10. *But do not ſuperior abilities, or ſuperior attainments confer the right of ruling?*

No: for *(a)* there is juſt the ſame reaſon for a perſon's interference in my private buſineſs, becauſe he pretends to know more of it than I do, as there is for his interference in my public buſineſs on the ſame pretence. *(b)* Moreover, has the community or the individual the right of deciding who poſſeſſes ſuch? Surely not the latter, or the claims would be infinite: and if the former, then for whatever reaſon the authority is conferred, it is derived from the conſent of the community. *(c)* Public tranſactions do not require more than ordinary talents. A man of common underſtanding with the requiſite application to the neceſſary ſtudies, is as equal to the public as to the private departments of life. *(d)* This ſcheme would introduce all the evils of competition. *(e)* Connections and riches would perpetually interfere, ſo as to render the choice impracticable on the

ground of ability. *(f)* In a large community it would be impoſſible to determine who had the beſt title on this ſcore.

Beſide theſe I think no other ſources of political authority can be pointed out; and as none of theſe appear to furniſh ſufficient ground for the claim, but are all ſubject to inſuperable objections, I conclude, that *the right of exerciſing political power, whether about to commence or actually exiſting, is derived ſolely from the people.* Of courſe, wherever ſuch power is exerciſed, unleſs by virtue of a compact expreſs, or upon ſufficient ground implied, ſuch exertion is TYRANNY.

II. But the people (*i. e.* a multitude of individuals) can have no right to exerciſe power, authority, or dominion over a fellow-creature, in their collective capacity, except in thoſe caſes where they had ſuch a right in their capacity of individuals. The *people* is a term, expreſſing an aggregate of individuals; and the rights of the people (previous to compact) are no other than the aggregate of the rights belonging in common to the individuals who compoſe the people. If any other rights be aſcribed to *the people*, whence are they derived? Excepting therefore ſuch caſes as theſe, viz. the right of parental dominion until manhood; the right of bodily coercion to prevent an injury being offered; the right of repelling an injury attempted: and the right of compelling reſtitution for an injury committed, it will follow from this and the firſt propoſition, that no power, authority, or dominion can juſtly be exerciſed over any individual which has not been precedently derived from his own conſent. Caſes of infancy, idiocy, lunacy, coverture, and others ſimilar, are evidently included in the preceding exception: ſuch perſons alſo being either naturally or by compact, *ſui incompotes*, incapable of ſelf-direction. With reſpect however to unmarried women at years of diſcretion, the common practice of nations appears to be inequitable, and perhaps indeed to the married.*

III. The

* Since theſe propoſitions were firſt publiſhed, I have repeatedly conſidered the ſubject of the *rights of women*, and I am perfectly unable to ſuggeſt any argument in ſupport of the political ſuperiority ſo generally arrogated by the male ſex, which will not equally apply to any ſyſtem of deſpotiſm of man over man. The firſt of theſe PROPOSITIONS ON CIVIL GOVERNMENT, is juſt as applicable to women as to men. The fact is, that we behave to the female ſex, much in the ſame manner as we behave to the poor. We firſt keep their minds, and then their perſons in ſubjection. We educate women from infancy to marriage, in ſuch a way as to debilitate both their corporeal and their mental powers. All the accompliſhments we teach them are directed, not to their future benefit in life, but

III. The authority of the governors, is derived from the conſent of the governed. But no man can reaſonably be preſumed, voluntarily to have delegated to another any dominion over himſelf, but for his own good: and in expectation of ſomething in return at leaſt equivalent to the conceſſion. Nor can any man be ſuppoſed to prefer the ſtate of civil ſociety, but with a proſpect of living more happily upon the whole by becoming a member of ſuch a ſtate, than otherwiſe. Hence, the happineſs of the community (*i. e.* of the individuals who compoſe it) is the great end and object of civil ſociety; and the regulations adopted, are, or ought to be, no other than the means to that end.

IV. Farther, as no man can reaſonably be preſumed to have made a voluntary ſurrender of any right previouſly enjoyed, or to have ſubmitted voluntarily to any ſubjection, but in expectation that in the ſum of happineſs upon the whole he would be no loſer by ſo doing; it follows, that no right can be preſumed to be given up, or any dominion delegated, but what is abſolutely neceſſary to attain the great object of civil ſociety, viz. his own happineſs in common with that of the other individuals who have done the ſame: otherwiſe we muſt ſuppoſe a voluntary conceſſion of rights for the benefit of others, and a voluntary ſubjection to the will of others without an expected equivalent in return: which, except in the caſes of family connections, or obligations conferred, or peculiar friendſhip, is abſurd.

V. Alſo, wherever it can be made highly probable that

but to the amuſement of the male ſex? and having for a ſeries of years with much aſſiduity, and ſometimes at much expence, incapacitated them for any ſerious occupation, we ſay they are not fit to govern themſelves, and arrogate the right of making them our ſlaves thro' life. Thus we too frequently wed play things, and not friends and companions; and we in our turn are the dupes of cunning, and the victims of all the petty paſſions, as a juſt reward for the tyrannical maxims we are at ſuch pains to inculcate. I have read the writings of Mrs. M. Graham, of Miſs Wollſtoncroft, of Mrs. Barbauld, of Mrs. Montague, Miſs Carter, Miſs Seward, Mrs. Dobſon, Miſs H. M. Williams, &c. in England—I have converſed with Theroigne, with Madame Condorcet, Madame Robert, Madame Lavoiſier, &c. in Paris. What theſe women are, other women might become. I have often felt my own inferiority, and often lamented the preſent iniquitous and moſt abſurd notions on the ſubject of the diſparity of ſexes. I have converſed with politicians, and read the writings of politicians, but I have ſeldom met with views more enlarged, more juſt, more truly patriotic; or with political reaſonings more acute, or arguments more forcible, than in the converſation of Theroigne, and the writings of Miſs Wollſtoncroft. Let the defenders of male deſpotiſm anſwer (if they can) "THE RIGHTS OF WOMAN" by Miſs Wollſtoncroft.

from

from the nature of civil ſociety, it cannot afford an equivalent for any particular right ſuppoſed to be ſurrendered, we may fairly conclude that ſuch right never was or could have been ſurrendered. Thus the right of a man to the excluſive ſociety of his wife, the right of a parent to educate his children in his own way, the right of following the dictates of conſcience in matters of religion, the right of reſiſting a ſudden attempt to deprive one of life, &c. are ſuch as have no equivalent to my knowledge in any thing that ſociety can beſtow. It cannot, therefore, in equity be preſumed that theſe rights are renounced on becoming a member of political ſociety, nor can ſociety be preſumed to require the renunciation of that, which it cannot purchaſe by an equivalent.

VI. By Prop. III. & *ſeq.* wherever the power or dominion delegated is inconſiſtent with the object of civil ſociety, for which alone it was delegated, the perſons delegating muſt have a right of recalling or annulling partially or totally, as circumſtances may require, that power which no longer anſwers the ends of its creation. *Ceſſante ratione ceſſat et ipſa lex.* Hence alſo, the propriety of frequent reviſions of political conſtitutions. For experience alone can determine the kind and degree of power which is abſolutely neceſſary and no more, to effect the purpoſes of civil ſociety. With reſpect to which indeed our knowledge hitherto ſeems in its infancy.

VII. In caſe of any diſpute reſpecting authority claimed, the burden of proof lies rigorouſly upon the claimants. For it is ſtrictly incumbent on every man before he acts, to be certain that he is not about to do an act of injuſtice, more eſpecially if the ſlighteſt intimation be given that this may be the conſequence. Nor is it at all incumbent on thoſe who are the objects of exerted authority to prove that no ſuch authority equitably exiſts; for it is indiſputable that no man is bound to prove a negative. Experience moreover ſhews the liability to abuſe of entruſted authority, and the conſequent propriety of inſiſting on this condition.

VIII. For the ſame reaſon, wherever the renunciation of a right on the part of the governed, is claimed by the governors as neceſſary to the ends of ſociety, it is incumbent on the latter (more eſpecially if required) to point out clearly the neceſſity alledged. Exerted authority, where the propriety demanded is not ſhewn, is the ſame as if it were improperly (*i. e.* tyrannically) exerted. *De non apparentibus et non exiſtentibus eadem eſt ratio.*

IX. Nor can the renunciation of any right be demanded of one individual which may not be equally required of every other individual of the community, otherwiſe ſociety will be benefited at the expence of an act of injuſtice; for it ought to be preſumed that every member of a community enters into it upon equal terms with the reſt, there being no reaſon in the nature of the thing, why ſome ſhould be ſuppoſed to join voluntarily in a ſociety under peculiar diſadvantages, or to conſent that excluſive privileges ſhould belong to others.

X. Hence, if from peculiar circumſtances the good of the community require that ſome part of its members ſhould give up certain of their rights, or be any way reſtrained in the enjoyment of them, this can only be inſiſted on in the way of purchaſe; and a full equivalent is due to thoſe who thus contribute to the good of the community out of the common proportion of the reſt of its members. Of courſe, where ſociety has no equivalent to beſtow in return for the renunciation or reſtriction of any right on the part of ſuch of its members from whom it is expected, this renunciation or reſtriction cannot be compelled without an act of injuſtice.

XI. Neither is it to be preſumed that on entering into ſociety we have ſurrendered the right of doing that which, independant of ſociety and antecedent thereto, it was our *duty* to perform. A debt from *A* to *B* can never be cancelled by any agreement between *A* and *C*, wherein *B* is no way concerned. It is a duty (for inſtance) incumbent upon every man whether he be or be not a member of ſociety, to worſhip God in that way which his judgment points out as the moſt proper; nor can any compact expreſs or implied, between him, and others of his fellow-creatures, juſtify any breach whatever of his duty to his Creator.

XII. Moreover, as the intent or end of ſociety is the promotion of the happineſs of the individuals who compoſe it, and as the benefits of ſociety can extend to or be enjoyed during a *part* of our exiſtence only—we may infer generally, that the means of promoting our happineſs in ſociety (*i. e.* the regulations we ſubmit to therein) ought to coincide with the means we are to uſe for promoting our happineſs upon the *whole* of our exiſtence, and when political ſociety with reſpect to us ſhall be no more. Otherwiſe ſociety, inſtead of adding to our happineſs upon the whole, would decreaſe it, and the ſole object of its inſtitution would be defeated.

XIII. It

XIII. It is to be obſerved, however, that we are not permitted *to do evil that good may come*; for any enormity might be juſtified upon ſuch a pretence. So that, if any perſon under an idea that he is performing a duty of ſuperior obligation to thoſe of ſociety, does an injury to the perſon and the property of his neighbour, it will be perfectly conſiſtent with the ends of ſociety that ſuch perſon be puniſhed; not indeed under the notion of preventing his obedience to the dictates of his conſcience, but upon the general ground of preventing and repreſſing injurious conduct. For without this the ends of ſociety could never be accompliſhed, nor could ſociety itſelf exiſt: while the puniſhment of the perſon injuring, on the other pretence, viz. becauſe we think his conſcience is miſinformed, would be a groſs act of injuſtice; and equally applicable againſt ourſelves as againſt him. Moreover the right of repelling an injury, would have belonged to the perſon injured on whatever pretence it were offered, had ſociety never exiſted. This reaſoning is agreeable to the common axioms of, *ſic utere tuo ut alieno non lædas*. And, rights inconſiſtent with, or deſtructive of each other, cannot exiſt.

The ſix laſt propoſitions, are applicable to the ſubject of *religious liberty*.

XIV. Society is intended to promote the happineſs of the individuals who compoſe it. Hence the intereſt (*i. e.* the happineſs) of the majority, is to be preferred to that of the minority. Otherwiſe ſociety would produce a decreaſe, and not an addition to the ſum of temporal happineſs. It is poſſible indeed, that promoting the intereſt of the minor part, might in ſome particular caſe produce a degree of happineſs equal to ten, while promoting the intereſt of the major part, in that particular caſe might produce a degree of happineſs equal only to nine. In ſuch a caſe the degree ten ought perhaps to be preferred. But as we are not in poſſeſſion of a ſufficient number of data, in the preſent ſtate of human affairs, to aſcertain ſuch a point as this, it cannot practically be noticed. So that the general rule in this propoſition holds true.

XV. Hence, excepting thoſe rights which it would be inconſiſtent with the ends of ſociety to renounce, or that are unneceſſary to the ends of ſociety, or connected with duties of prior or ſuperior obligation to thoſe of ſociety—the intereſt of any one or any number of individuals conſtituting

tuting the minority only, muſt be preſumed to be conceded where it interferes with the intereſt of the majority.

XVI. Hence alſo, for every practical purpoſe the majority is ſynonymous with the ſociety.

XVII. The ſame reaſons will hold with reſpect to all thoſe caſes where the opinions of the individuals who compoſe the ſociety are requiſite, concerning any propoſed means of compaſſing the ends of ſociety. For if the opinions of the few were in all caſes to be deemed of equal weight with the opinions of the many, the object of ſociety would be perpetually fruſtrated, nor could ſociety itſelf long exiſt.

XVIII. Moreover, in all caſes where the ſentiments of the majority cannot be aſcertained *numeratim* or individually, it muſt of neceſſity be preſumed that an *active* majority is a true majority: for where every one may be active who chuſes, the preſumption is equal on both ſides of the queſtion concerning thoſe who are apparently neuter. Hence whenever an opportunity is given to all, publickly to ſignify their ſentiments on any general queſtions, the majority of thoſe who thus actually ſignify their ſentiments, ought to be accounted the majority of the whole.

XIX. But as it is impoſſible even for the majority of a ſociety, to act individually without ſuch confuſion as would defeat the end of the aſſembly, unleſs in very ſmall communities, a few muſt of neceſſity be deputed to act for the many.

The propoſitions reſpecting majorities will of courſe hold true concerning theſe (comparative) few.

XX. The few, thus deputed to act for the many, of courſe alſo receive all their authority from their conſtituents, for there is no other ſource, conſiſtent with the maxim already exhibited.

XXI. As this authority is conceded for ſome end or purpoſe, it muſt of courſe be limited in extent and duration by the end or purpoſe for which it was created: hence the perſons deputing, muſt have a right remaining of extending or limiting, continuing or annulling the delegated authority, as the circumſtances for which it was granted may from time to time require. Alſo, as the happineſs of the community, and not merely of the repreſentatives or perſons deputed, conſtitutes the object of ſociety, the majority of the community, *i. e.* of the perſons deputing, muſt have the right of judging of theſe circumſtances.

XXII. If

XXII. If therefore the perſons deputed extend their authority in continuance or degree, either beyond what the circumſtances require for which it was delegated; or beyond or without or againſt the inclinations of the majority of the perſons deputing them, the rights of the latter are infringed and they are injured.

XXIII. But every man who does an injury to another, of whatever kind or to whatever extent, is accountable to the perſons injured, who may demand redreſs. Hence whenever the perſons deputed exerciſe their authority inconſiſtently with the ends for which it was committed to them, they are accountable to the people who committed it. But as the people who committed it retain the right of judging whether it be properly exerted or not, the perſons to whom it is committed are accountable to the people univerſally. That is, the governors of whatever deſcription in every ſociety upon earth are accountable to the governed.

XXIV. By Prop. I. and II. no perſon can juſtly exerciſe any power or dominion over another, but what is precedently derived from that other: nor indeed can any other definition in ſubſtance be given of ſlavery than, "that ſtate "or condition in which a man is governed without * his "conſent." Sometimes indeed the caſes may be ſo few and the degree ſo ſlight, that it paſſes unnoticed. But that the eſſence of ſlavery is ſuch as above deſcribed, will be evident to any one who will be at the pains of thinking on the ſubject. Hence if any member of a ſociety is deprived of the means of aſſenting or diſſenting, either by himſelf or his repreſentative, to the regulations of that ſociety to which he is at the ſame time obnoxious in quality of being a member thereof; or, if through any circumſtances which do not affect the individuals of the community in common as well as himſelf, or to which he hath not had an opportunity of previouſly aſſenting, his aſſent or diſſent is rendered ineffectual, ſuch perſon is clearly under a dominion and rule which is not ultimately derived from himſelf: his ſtate with reſpect to thoſe regulations and the executive officers of them, is a ſtate of ſlavery, and the enforcement of thoſe regulations with reſpect to him is tyranny. Nor is the nature of the thing changed becauſe others are ſufferers as well as himſelf, or becauſe the tyranny is only exerted to a certain degree.

* Not, "againſt, for this may conſiſt with freedom, as in the caſe of any minority. It is ſufficient that on any queſtion cognizable by a ſociety, the majority determine.

XXV. The

XXV. The caſe of a ſtranger, not permanently reſident is hardly an exception to the preceding propoſition, for by the terms, ſuch an one is not a member of the ſociety in queſtion, but of ſome other. And, in fact, his voluntary reſidence in or paſſage though the territory of any ſociety but his own, amounts to an aſſent for the time to the regulations of that ſociety which he thus voluntarily enters.

XXVI. It is a queſtion, however, much more difficult to determine, whether the right of ſuffrage, ſhould be in any degree regulated by the poſſeſſion of *property*, or be conſidered as a right ſimply attached to the *perſon*. For my own part, after much conſideration, I incline to think that a line of excluſion *may* be drawn, and that no injuſtice is done by debarring thoſe from voting in the choice of national repreſentatives, who on account of their poverty, are exempted from the payment of all taxes. For, firſt, no perſon can demand to interfere in framing laws, who contributes nothing to the expence of enacting or enforcing them. Secondly, nor can any one demand this who poſſeſſes no oſtenſible pledge that he will ſubmit to the execution of them. Thirdly, by far the greateſt part of laws relate to objects in which ſuch a perſon has no intereſt. For inſtance, it is abſurd to give a right of legiſlating concerning the property of others to thoſe who have none of their own; and who riſk nothing on the event of their own regulations. Fourthly, a certain quantity of territory is eſſentially neceſſary to the exiſtence of a political community; and it is optional to the poſſeſſors thereof, to admit or reject as members of the community upon their own terms, thoſe who have no proprietary or uſufructuary right to any ſuch territory; provided alſo it be left optional to the latter, to accept or reject a membership on the terms propoſed. Fifthly, as ſo large a portion of the laws of every community conſiſts of regulations concerning property, the right of ſuffrage ought to be conſidered as connected with both the objects of law, viz. perſons and property. Even if two ſeparate legiſlators were provided, one for a *civil*, and the other for a *criminal code*, yet would the preceding objections hold with reſpect to the latter. Sixthly, the excluſion on the ground above mentioned, would extend to ſo ſmall a portion of the ſociety, that where the repreſentation is adequate there would be little chance but the regulations adopted

ed would accord with the inclinations of a majority of the *whole* community.

To the preceding reaſons may be added, the difficulty of aſcertaining who had or had not voted before in any particular diſtrict, if mere perſonality gave this right—the probable ſuſpicion of want of knowledge and independance in this claſs of people—the conſideration that thoſe who enjoyed the right in queſtion, would be equally intereſted with the perſon excluded, as to thoſe laws in which alone the latter could claim an intereſt—the ſtimulus to exertion, which the excluſion itſelf would furniſh—and the ſuperior facility with which the ſuffrages of a community could be collected, if confined to houſeholders paying (as the term is in England) ſcot and lot.

Notwithſtanding however I incline upon the whole to the propriety of ſuch an excluſion as here propoſed, I ſtill think the ſubject requires more diſcuſſion than has yet been given it; and that to make the excluſion itſelf equitable, no puniſhment ought to be enjoined involving the claſs excluded, which every other individual would not be equally ſubject to, for the ſame crime? and alſo that no regulations ought to be made reſpecting the individuals of the claſs thus excluded, and thoſe of any other, which in their operation would not be equally beneficial to both; and laſtly, that free egreſs out of the community ſhould be allowed to all thoſe who are diſinclined to ſtay in it; in which caſe perhaps an implied conſent may fairly be preſumed on the part of thoſe who voluntarily remain.*

XXVII. This laſt condition is indeed contrary to a maxim (I believe) univerſal among municipal lawyers, viz. that "the "natural born ſubject of a ſtate is under an obligation to "perpetual allegiance"—a maxim (already noticed in Prop. I. and beyond all doubt abſurd and tyrannical—abſurd in as much as all civil ſociety is founded on compact, and no compact can be valid unleſs between parties able and willing to contract; but the mere fortuitous circumſtance of being born here or there in this ſtate or that, is not under the control of the native at the time, nor is ability or willingneſs then predicable concerning him; nor can any right

* The reader will have ſeen, that having thought more maturely upon the ſubject, I have changed my opinion for reaſons already aſſigned. I leave the paſſage here as it ſtands, becauſe it contains a ſummary of the arguments on the ſide of the queſtion which I have abandoned.

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be ſhewn to a parent to make an indefeaſible contract on the part of his child, to be performed when the latter is no longer under the controul of the former: tyrannical this maxim is, becauſe whatever may be the government, however deſpotic in principles or practice, it arrogates perpetual indefeaſible dominion, underived from the conſent, expreſs or implied, of the perſon governed. This particular queſtion, however, I ſhall treat expreſsly much more at large, at ſome future opportunity.

XXVIII. The preceding propoſitions have been deduced abſtractedly from the conſideration of any particular ſociety, and appear to hold univerſally true concerning ſociety itſelf; and therefore where a civil ſociety is already formed, theſe propoſitions ought to be conſidered as the terms and foundations of the implied compact among the members; the oppoſite propoſitions being inequitable. Hence whether a man is about to enter for the firſt time as a member of any political community; or whether (fortuitouſly with reſpect to himſelf) he finds himſelf already a member of ſuch a community, his rights are ſtill the ſame, and all dominion over him muſt ultimately be derived from his own conſent expreſsly given or equitably implied.

XXIX. Wherever, therefore, any political government is not conſtituted and exerciſed in conformity to this grand maxim, "that all power is derived from the people," and the evident conſequences deducible from that maxim—the governed are injured, and deprived of rights which may be proved to belong to them. So that the people in every nation upon earth, may juſtly demand that the government under which they live be altered in conformity to that maxim, wherever it is not ſo already.

XXX. But it is univerſally allowed, that wherever a right exiſts, there exiſts alſo concomitantly, a right to the means of obtaining it; elſe the right itſelf is nugatory. So that if any right belonging to the people ſhould be forcibly infringed, or withholden from them by the governors of any community, after repeated applications for redreſs in a peaceable way, the former have a right forcibly to obtain it.

XXXI. Alſo from Prop. VI. and XXI. it may be deduced univerſally that whenever any alteration in the form of government, or change in the officers of government appears eligible to the majority of the people, they have a right to inſiſt on ſuch alteration or change, whether the officers before

appointed were temporary or hereditary. For, whether the office itſelf, or the officers, anſwer the purpoſe of their appointment, muſt be decided either by the governors or the governed. This right of determination ought not to belong to the former, becauſe they not only may, but generally have an intereſt oppoſite to the welfare of the whole community —the honours, the power, and the emoluments annexed to offices of government, being univerſally deſirable, the poſſeſſors will be perpetually induced to ſupport their own continuance in the enjoyment of them, whether neceſſary or otherwiſe to the ends of ſociety. The people, however *can* have no intereſt but that of the community at large (*i. e.* of themſelves) and of courſe can have no other object in determining, but the object itſelf for which ſociety was formed.

The will of the people, therefore, (*i. e.* of the majority,) aſcertained as correctly as the nature of the caſe will admit, is of itſelf a ſufficient reaſon for any change whatever, in the conſtitution of a kingdom or the officers of government.

XXXII. As the people have this right, they have alſo a right to the means of enabling them to exerciſe it: otherwiſe (as I have obſerved before) the right itſelf is nugatory; a mere name. Hence after every peaceable method of obtaining any political change, has been repeatedly uſed in vain on the part of the people, the latter will be juſtified in riſing to *compel* an obedience to their commands.

XXXIII. But as it cannot be ſuppoſed that the majority of the people will riſe at one and the ſame inſtant of time, ſome muſt riſe before others. So that if the common and peaceable methods to obtain a compliance with the requiſitions of the people, have been unſucceſsfully repeated, any number of men, however ſmall, are juſtified in making a beginning, where a beginning muſt neceſſarily be made: nor can any general reaſonings, nor do any hiſtorical facts warrant the opinion that ſuch changes or alterations will ever be attempted on light ground: that burden muſt be heavy indeed which a whole people unite to ſhake off.

XXXIV. But as every member of ſociety ought to aim at the welfare of the community, and of courſe ſhould endeavour to produce the greateſt balance of good upon the whole; in caſe any alteration although deſirable to the majority of the nation, if attempted by force, is likely to produce a conſiderable degree of reſiſtance from the officers in power, the good to be obtained by the alteration ought to be compared with the

evils

evils likely to enſue from the enforcement of it; and if the latter *obviouſly* preponderate, no man can be juſtified in attempting ſuch alteration by force at *that opportunity*.

In all caſes however it is to be conſidered in the compariſon, that the evils, will moſt probably afflict the preſent generation only: the good, will moſt probably endure to poſterity for an indefinite length of time. Thus England enjoys the benefit of the exertions of the people under the tyrants John, Charles, and James even at this day: the evils of thoſe exertions were confined to a generation or two.

Such are the *principal* deductions, from that grand maxim, the very corner ſtone of legitimate government, that *all power is derived from the people*. Deductions, which the rulers of the earth have ſeldom inclined to admit, as they tend to the abolition of uſurped authority. But thoſe only will inveigh againſt promulgating the civil rights of mankind, who either mean to infringe thoſe rights, or have ſome intereſt or other in defending thoſe who do. Sedition againſt the officers of government, is a fruitful ſource of criminal juriſdiction; while ſedition againſt the majeſty of the people, is a crime unknown to the penal code, and univerſally practiſed with impunity and in caſes out of number arrogated as a right, by the ſervants of the people in every nation upon earth.

The ſtructure of political oppreſſion, however, begins now to totter: its day is far ſpent: the extenſion of knowledge has undermined its foundations, and I hope the day is not far diſtant when in Europe at leaſt, one ſtone of the fabric will not be left upon another.

FINIS.